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**The nature of women's power: An interpretive analysis of  
perceptions of selected senior administrators in higher education**

**Cartwright, Talula Elizabeth, Ed.D.**

**The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1988**

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THE NATURE OF WOMEN'S POWER: AN INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS OF  
PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION


by

Talula Elizabeth Cartwright

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education

Greensboro  
1988

Approved by

  
Dissertation Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of power to women who are in a position to have it and to use it. This was accomplished in the following manner: (a) constructing a conceptual framework of women's power from the author's personal reflections and selected pertinent research; (b) conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with five senior administrators from higher education; (c) developing a thematic analysis of the data that emerged from these interviews; (d) interpreting the themes theoretically and personally against a background of the relevant literature and the researcher's reflections; (e) suggesting a new paradigm that is more appropriate for women's power.

The investigation was conducted through the qualitatively analytical technique of interpretive inquiry. Data gathered from the interviews were phenomenologically analyzed to reveal how the selected senior administrators perceived power generally and their own power specifically. Identified perceptions of power were interpreted theoretically and personally within the previously constructed conceptual framework.

Insights based upon the perceptions of the five selected women are as follows: (a) Power is connected to intense commitments, to love and caring, to action, to adaptability and creativity, to the motivating, influencing and empowering

of others, to the accepting of one's circumstances, to integrity and "goodness," and to an optimistic worldview.

(b) Women tend to have a collaborative power style.

(c) There is an enormous responsibility associated with power to other people, the future, and larger systems. (d) The closest synonym for power for a woman is "influence"; the word "control" meant not control of others but control of self. (e) The male paradigm of levels of power had limited applicability for women, and the following model was suggested as levels of power that are appropriate for women:

1. the power to be;
2. the power to control oneself while still not hurting others;
3. the power to maintain one's values in the face of obstacles while still caring for others;
4. the power to influence others with integrity while still being generous;
5. the power to affect the future of systems in positive ways.

Recommendations include research into nonpowerful women, additional groups of powerful women, groups of women with historically traditional female roles, and men.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people who have, over the many years I struggled to complete this personal goal, provided me with various kinds of support. My hope and my prayer is that I have thanked and will thank these friends.

Specifically, now, I acknowledge the members of my committee, past and present, for their help, their support, their criticism, their guidance, and their patience. Those committee members are Dr. Lois V. Edinger, Dr. Edwin Bell, Dr. David Purpel, Dr. William Tullar, Dr. Roland Nelson, and Dr. Dwight Clark. I also acknowledge my typist, Elizabeth Hunt, for her patience and perseverance through this paper's many revisions.

I also acknowledge my interviewees, five gracious and powerful women who took the time from their very busy schedules to consider my study.

I also acknowledge the courageous researchers who came before me, breaking the ground of the study of women's power and providing a rich wealth of ideas.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL PAGE . . . . .	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	iii
 CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Background . . . . .	1
Purpose of Study . . . . .	4
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	6
Significance of the Study. . . . .	7
Basic Assumptions. . . . .	8
Definitions of Terms . . . . .	9
Methodology. . . . .	9
Summary. . . . .	15
II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK . . . . .	16
Introduction and Rationale . . . . .	16
Cultural Views of Men and Women: The Impact of Sexism as a Worldview . . . . .	18
Sex Differences. . . . .	23
Women Administrators in Higher Education Conclusion . . . . .	30
Conclusion . . . . .	37
Women's Ways of Perceiving Things. . . . .	39
Language of Women . . . . .	62
Power. . . . .	70
The Meaning of Power . . . . .	71
Women's Views of Power . . . . .	87
Personal Reflections . . . . .	96
Female Role Models . . . . .	97
Male Role Models . . . . .	108
Adult Experiences. . . . .	110
Conclusion . . . . .	115
Conceptual Framework for Thematic Analysis	116
III. METHODOLOGY . . . . .	121
Purpose and Statement of the Problem . . . . .	121
Selection of Methodology . . . . .	122
Procedures . . . . .	130
Selection of Subjects. . . . .	130
Data Collection and Treatment . . . . .	131

CHAPTER III (continued)	Page
Development of the Interview Environment	133
Analysis of Data . . . . .	134
Conclusion . . . . .	136
IV. INTERVIEW: EXPLICATION OF CONTENT . . . . .	139
Introduction . . . . .	139
Backgrounds and Summaries. . . . .	140
Administrator A . . . . .	140
Administrator B . . . . .	143
Administrator C . . . . .	147
Administrator D . . . . .	151
Administrator E . . . . .	156
Emerging Themes . . . . .	162
Fear and Denial of Power . . . . .	162
Power as Influence . . . . .	176
Power as Control . . . . .	181
Women as Nurturing and Caregiving. . . . .	185
Integrity and "Goodness" . . . . .	188
Being a Woman: Appropriate Roles. . . . .	194
Role Models. . . . .	200
Relationship of Credentials to Power . . . . .	206
Giving One's Power Away . . . . .	209
Other Significant Minor Themes . . . . .	214
Conceptualizing. . . . .	218
Bi-Directional Power . . . . .	219
Woman's "Intuition" . . . . .	219
V. ANALYSIS . . . . .	222
Analysis of Recurring Themes . . . . .	222
Intense Commitment to Goals. . . . .	223
Connection to Love . . . . .	224
The Necessity of Action. . . . .	227
Connection with Adaptability . . . . .	232
Getting Others to Align with One's Goals	233
Accepting One's Circumstances. . . . .	234
Power and Creativity . . . . .	235
Empowering Other People. . . . .	236
Integrity and "Goodness" . . . . .	237
Giving One's Power Away . . . . .	238
Not Defining One's Circumstances as Defeat	239
Additional Areas of Discussion from the	
Interviews . . . . .	240
Analysis of Themes Against Literature	
Background . . . . .	242



CHAPTER	Page
VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS. .	255
Introduction . . . . .	255
Summary . . . . .	257
Cultural Views of Men and Women. . . . .	257
Women's Ways of Perceiving Things. . . . .	259
Language of Women. . . . .	261
Power. . . . .	262
Reflections. . . . .	265
Methodology. . . . .	266
Themes . . . . .	269
Conclusions. . . . .	271
Recommendations. . . . .	276
Epilogue . . . . .	277
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	285
APPENDIX A INTERVIEW QUESTIONS . . . . .	295

## Dedication

This paper is humbly dedicated to my mother, Helen Medford Cartwright; my husband, Richard Thomas England; and my children, Charity Elizabeth Crabtree, Edwin Baxter Crabtree, and Isaac Cartwright England; whose patience, support, and love strengthened and encouraged me as I completed this study.

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

Background

What is power? Is it something that is exhibited only by an action, or is it a state of being? Is it peculiar to certain positions, or can anyone have power? Is power to be desired, or is it to be feared?

The word "power" has been widely used lately to describe many experiences and conditions. We could list hundreds of uses, including "the power of positive thinking," "power to the people," "black power," "the power behind the throne," "brain power," and others. In each term in common usage, the word might mean command, authority, force, influence, prestige, superiority, ability, talent, energy, strength, virtue, effectiveness, potential, competence, result, qualification, control, jurisdiction, dominance, might, prerogative, management, dominion, faculty, capacity, endowment, potency, vigor, or other similar qualities. In each case, the word is called on to mean something slightly different and unique, and yet there is a way in which there is a connectedness among all the different uses. Because "power" is an abstract word, it lends itself to that kind of chaos. An additional complexity results when an interpretation of

value is added to the concept--when, in effect, the judgment is made as to whether power is "good," or "bad."

Because of the increase of violence and graft in our society, many have come to mistrust power, even to equate it with the violence and graft with which they find it associated so frequently in the news. It becomes harder and harder to ignore the misdeeds of the very powerful in the barrage of press reports that accompany them, and a kind of causal fallacy creeps in: Because the power occurred before the misbehavior, it must have caused it. It is easy to forget that graft, corruption, violence, and other transgressions occur in the non-powerful as well.

The traditionally male paradigm of power has been one of action, if not aggression. A powerful person has been called "a mover and shaker," "a real go-getter," and other epithets that indicated action. Passivity has traditionally been associated with non-power, even with weakness. Because the traditionally female role was one of passivity and dependency, females have usually been associated with non-power and weakness. In fact, this view has been so strongly held that powerful women have been subject to having their femininity, if not their sexuality, called into question.

And yet there have always been powerful women. Margaret Mead described cultures in which the woman was the decision maker and males were viewed as weak. In Western cultures, this has not routinely occurred. Even so, the power of women

has been acknowledged by such phrases as "the henpecked husband," "the power behind the throne," "behind every successful man stands a woman," and the like. The kind of power a woman was allowed to have, then, was the kind of power that was exercised through a man--thus her femininity was left intact.

In 1987, thousands of people celebrated the "Harmonic Convergence," one aspect of which is the return of feminine energy to the planet. As the heralded "New Age" dawns, there is a renewed interest in the kind of power women have. There is a growing consciousness of the fact that female energy is quite different from male energy. This belief, though not clearly apprehended by the academic community, is adding fuel to the fires of interest in female power, which is also becoming the subject of inquiry by social scientists, management scientists, educators, psychologists, and others. The subject of female power, or feminine energy, is becoming a very popular subject.

Power is inextricably knotted into the fabric of leadership. Leaders with no power do not lead. They do not have followers, although some people may walk in the same direction they are walking, for their own or different reasons. And people with power will usually lead, even if it is just by example. Leadership is an act that depends, sometimes in a mysterious way, on the power of the leader. Power and leadership are not the same, but they are mutually useful.

The kind of power one demonstrates has a great influence on the kind of leader that person will be. One exhibiting Machiavellian power will lead as a despot. One exhibiting strong self-assurance and its resulting power will lead by example or model.

A more feminine model of power might be one suggested by Taoist principles--empowering oneself by empowering others, the basic paradox of "less means more"--the less power you use, the more you have. By this model, in fact, someone who scores very high on the achievement (nACH--need to achieve) or power (nPOWER--need for power) scales (McClelland, Winter and others) might have very little power, because they had such a need to have more. It is such apparent contradictions that this research addresses. When the feminine, the "unpowerful" sex has power, how does she view it and how does she use it?

#### Purpose of Study

Women have available to them many kinds of power, professionally, personally, socially, politically, creatively, artistically, and sexually, just to mention a few broad areas. Within the last two decades, women have moved into arenas wherein power was a clear and necessary operating tool. Not only has it been necessary for women to be willing to use power, but it has been necessary for them to be open about it, and indeed they have demanded that right and responsibility. The decades of the 70's and 80's have brought widespread

attention to the issues surrounding women and their struggles to alter their roles in a world that had been dominated largely by men. This widespread attention has created a new focus both on women's issues and on human issues as they relate to women. While the idea that women have power is so obvious as to almost be a truism, it is still a non-mainstream, if not a revolutionary, idea. Men and women both have traditionally thought of men as more powerful than women. It is the purpose of this study to consider the human issue of power, its relationship to some women who have it, and their perception of what power is.

The academic environment has been in many ways kinder to women in their rise to equality in a world that had been dominated largely by men than has the corporate and business sector. During this century countless women have served admirably both as faculty and administrators of many of our country's most prestigious academic institutions, even though their percentage of representation has been small. Because the differences in gender may have mattered less in academe than they have in the corporate sector, the academic community may have accepted the power of women in authority positions more comfortably than has the rest of the male-dominated power structure. Subjects for this study were women who have attained power in the academic world.

### Statement of the Problem

It was the intention of this researcher to examine the power perceptions of selected women who are in positions of recognized power. The problem was to determine the nature of power to these women, to analyze interpretively their conceptions of power and their perceptions of their own power, and to examine this information against a conceptual framework which included selected data gathered from a review of relevant current research and the researcher's personal reflections.

The following procedures were used to address this problem:

1. Reflections by the researcher upon the development and nature of her own perception of power.
2. Development of a conceptual background of ideas and theories about women's perceptions and uses of power based on the selected writings of some key authors from this broad field.
3. Thematic explication of the responses of interviewed women and theoretical interpretation of themes.
4. Analyses of the implication of the results for women and suggestions for how the results could broadly affect society.

From a phenomenological perspective, then, the following questions were explored: What is the essence of power, its



meaning or its experience, to a woman who is in a position to have it and to use it? Is there a particularly feminine kind of power? How does the experience of power manifest itself, and how is it distinguished from other experiences?

### Significance of the Study

Power is an essential part of good leadership, and the female view of power has long been ignored or taken a back seat to the male view. Because of this bias, a subtlety of the generally held view of power is the acknowledgment, if even on a tacit level, that power is somehow a masculine characteristic, even when it is used or held by women (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). In a casual survey among some of my well-educated friends, for example, the question "Can you think of some powerful women that you know?" generally yielded a response of a woman whose abrasiveness or aggressiveness had created a negative reaction.

It is the personal view of this researcher that the power of a woman is not necessarily exerted always in an aggressive or masculine way, nor is it necessarily negative. In fact, if a feminine model for power could be made available for general use, it would improve the options of males as well as females. Surely it will be useful to at least know if the women who are in a position to have power and to use it share this prevailing negative view that power is abrasive. If they do share that view, it will be interesting to see if they are using power anyway, or if they are avoiding power in the interest of maintaining their femininity.

It is the position of this researcher that insight into female power would be an effective addition to the literature about power. Because women may not fit the standard for male power in many ways, and because the type of power they wield may be very different from male power, there is a need to analyze their particular type of power separately from the male paradigm. Indeed, the very fact that the researcher is herself female offers further significance to the study because of her personal familiarity with women's issues. It is through this familiarity that she may thus be able to pose critical questions that a male researcher might miss.

#### Basic Assumptions

The following underlying assumptions were accepted by the writer and provide a foundation and direction for the present study. They are:

1. Power is an integral part of a leadership position.
2. Women in leadership positions regularly have the opportunity to exercise power.
3. The experience of power to these women can be studied in depth through structured and analyzed conversations.

The basic broad assumption of this study was that an investigation of women from their own points of view required an interpretive inquiry approach to avoid the mechanistic assumptions about the nature of humanity inherent in

traditional positivist research. It would not be useful to attempt to prove the real essence of a woman's perspective by subjecting her to empirical research based on a male paradigm.

#### Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, power was specifically and deliberately not defined, since one purpose was to determine what this word meant to the women selected for this study.

The researcher limited the definition of educational administrators to include only those administrators in higher education, above the level of dean, at schools offering the baccalaureate degree.

#### Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine and understand the relationship between women and power, as perceived by top level female administrators in higher education. To fully determine and understand what the nature and experience of power is to these women, the mode of inquiry chosen was a thematic analysis of data collected from in-depth interviews using open-ended questions. This qualitative method of inquiry required that the study be bounded on all sides by the researcher's own reflections and interpretations. This requirement is both a necessary quality of phenomenological inquiry and an appropriate framework for a study conducted by

a woman about women. The conceptual framework of this study included the writer's own reflections as well as a review of the significant research into women and power.

In a small centralized location of a Southern East Coast state, there are twelve institutions of higher education, which for this study were defined as institutions offering the baccalaureate degree. Women who have attained a rank higher than Dean formed the population for this study. The assumption was that these women hold power, both institutionally and personally.

This researcher sought to elicit from these women their conception of what power is and their perceptions of their own power. Each interview was tape recorded, and the tapes were then transcribed, read, and thematically analyzed. Each administrator's interview was summarized, with variations from one administrator to another noted. Finally, the emerging themes were subjected to comparison with collected literature data, and resulting conclusions were noted.

The philosophical foundation of this study was the belief that a meaningful study of a human concern requires at least an understanding of that concern from a broad perspective, and that certain kinds of research are inadequate for that understanding. For this reason, the qualitative approach of interpretive inquiry was chosen, and the perceptions of power of selected women administrators were studied

through their own perspectives rather than by some quantitative means. The intent was to gain an in-depth understanding by a close investigation of a selected few rather than to capture some kind of "average" view of a larger number.

The research method chosen included interaction of the researcher with the subjects through observation and conversation. After the interview/observation phase was completed, the researcher adopted a more distanced analytical perspective to subject the data to rigorous subjective scrutiny to determine common themes and differences. A fuller understanding of the human subject was created through the use of these perspectives. This type of phenomenological inquiry required a deeply engaged interaction in the interview phase, and thus effected a collection of a richer, fuller group of data to be analyzed during the next phase. The rapport created by this type of interaction did not damage the research, but facilitated its natural reporting.

The quantitative tradition was founded on the assumption that there was an independently available social reality that could be factually described in its true state. This theoretical perspective held a clear distinction between facts and values. The qualitative tradition, on the other hand, held the view that truth could not be value-free, since reality is purely dependent on each individual's perception, and individuals cannot separate their perceptions and their values.

In this tradition, "facts" cease to exist in the way the quantitative scientists had used the term, since they become inherently value-laden and subject to interpretation. Particularly for imprecise and personal concepts such as power can we say that there are no "facts," existing separately from values, and that perhaps the values themselves are the facts.

In many ways, since a qualitative study has an implied intuitive component itself, it seems to be metaphorically the feminine side of research--the "soft" side of a research community's rich and full study. Because qualitative researchers are concerned with the perspectives of their participants, most qualitative researchers go into their studies without rigid hypotheses. They have a plan, but the plan is flexible, and they let the data themselves contribute to the plan. This is the very reason that it is so appropriate that the researcher's own perceptions bound this study on all sides--because this study does not exist except dynamically, changing and being changed by all the women and all the literature that contributed to it, including the writer.

Since a qualitative researcher has a greater emphasis on process than product, meanings tend to emerge as the research progresses. (See Chapter III for a deeper discussion of these issues.) For this reason, it was clearly appropriate that this writer not define power in the prospectus, but rather let its meaning emerge from the participants.

A widely used qualitative technique is the personal interview, and that is the technique that was employed in this study. The semi-structured open-ended interview was guided by general topics and sets of questions, but the content of the interview was controlled by the respondent, within the limits of guidance by the interviewer. (See Appendix A for questions.) These personal interviews were then tape recorded, transcribed, and committed to paper. The paper copies of these interviews were analyzed thematically.

In qualitative research, key words are "understanding" and "meaning." Qualitative researchers are most interested in adding to the understanding of the human, a complex, value-laden, perception-oriented, dynamic set of processes. To complicate things, each individual has different thoughts, different values, different perceptions, different experiences, and different understandings of the world. And, as Alfred Korzybski pointed out early in this century, all of these differences can change from day to day. The final conclusions reached by the end of this study had the potential and opportunity to change by the time the researcher wrote them down. The qualitative method does not despair at this complexity, however. Within these natural limitations, the qualitative approach holds that attempts to understand and to make meaning add depth and richness to the research community, and offer possibilities for further study and research

by future writers--perhaps even those who will use quantitative methods.

The effectiveness of an interpretive inquiry depends upon the skill and expertise of the researcher. The interviewer must focus on adaptation and accommodation. He or she must have a research plan, but must review, recycle, and change as the emerging data require.

The five women chosen to participate in this study are all unique individuals who perceive power in different ways and who have experienced it differently in their lives. It was the purpose of this study to understand these different perceptions and to appreciate them in their uniqueness while analyzing and discovering common themes as they occurred.

This study was approached without rigidly set hypotheses, but with guiding research questions and with a set of uniform guiding interview questions. These guiding interview questions fell into three categories: what it is like to be a woman, what it is like to be an administrator, and what it is like to use power. The researcher was responsible for ensuring that each one of these three interview areas was adequately addressed by the respondents. Within those interview areas, much free discussion was permitted, so that frequently individuals dealt with a later area before the question was addressed. The discussion of power was deliberately put last, and it was noted whether individuals mentioned or alluded



to it in the earlier sections on their own. The interviewees were free to expound on the subjects that interested them, and as long as they stayed within the broad areas of the study, they were permitted to do so, letting their meaning emerge as the researcher probed for understanding of the emerging data.

This study concludes with a discussion of the implications of the common themes and a recommendation for further study in the research community. These suggestions contribute to the literature concerning the nature of women and the nature of power.

#### Summary

The word "power" has many meanings, most of which have been traditionally related to the male. Because of the increased movement of women into power arenas, there is a need to understand how this term would translate into female use. Women have always had power available to them, and there have always been some powerful women, but the numbers of women who are using power and the numbers of women in positions of power are increasing. This research has considered selected women in such positions of power, and has examined their views interpretively in regard to their perceptions of their own power.

CHAPTER II  
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction and Rationale

The majority of printed research that contributed to this study came from four areas:

1. Literature about cultural views of men and women
2. Literature about women's ways of perceiving things
3. Literature about women's use of language
4. Literature about power

Literature about cultural views of men and women is especially germane to the subject of this study because the current views of men and women form part of our cultural lens, a collective lens through which we all as members of the culture view the world. It is necessary that we have an understanding of how we are viewing the world in order to see not only the perspective of the women who are the subjects of this study, but the perspective of the writer, and the perspective of the readers as well. This section is included first, because it will be useful in helping us understand the perspectives of the writers of the rest of the literature.

One specific aspect of our cultural perspective on women is our view of women administrators in higher education. This aspect is particularly pertinent to this study and is considered next.

Once the subject of views about the differences between men and women has been broached, the subsequent most critical subject is the consideration of women's ways of perceiving things, especially insofar as these ways are unique. The inclusion of this subject will provide important insights into the mechanism through which women perceive their power, the filters through which they are viewing the issue being studied.

Because women will be reporting their views of power through the medium of language, an understanding of the ways in which women use language is another critical issue that will be included.

Highly relevant to this study is a consideration of previous writings on the subject of power, particularly the writings that have formed the dominant cultural view. Because the majority of the writings about power have been about men, prior to the 1980's, the study of power will be representative rather than exhaustive, but will demonstrate the conceptual framework of the researcher.

An additional part of the conceptual framework is the researcher's own lens. A space will be devoted to a reflection on the researcher's background of experiences as they relate to the subject of power, and particularly to the subject of the experience of power to a woman.

Cultural Views of Men and Women:  
The Impact of Sexism as a Worldview

The way that society views men and women in our culture has a powerful impact on our cultural views about what activities are appropriate for men and what activities are appropriate for women. According to Whitmont (1982),

During the early thirties, Jung attempted what he then considered a preliminary characterization of the female and male predispositions. He termed Eros the tendency to relatedness, and deemed it fundamentally expressive of the Feminine. The male attitude was to be typified by Logos, spirit, creative and ordering intelligence, and meaning. Unfortunately, this first preliminary attempt has been treated . . . as though it were the final word for the intervening fifty years. In the light of women's increasing awareness of themselves, more and more evidence has been accumulating that the Eros--Logos concept is inadequate for covering the wide range of feminine and masculine dynamics. Moreover, it is . . . inappropriate. (p. 130)

It has been almost a truism in our culture that different activities have been tacitly mandated for men and for women in our culture. This has resulted in a continuing condition of inequitable employment for women, as well as in a culturally held belief that there were (and perhaps are) things that women simply cannot do. Demaris S. Wehr comments that "The plagues of sexism, misogyny, and the subtle, yet pernicious effects of androcentrism in society and consequently in scholarship . . . have been amply documented" (1987, p. 10).

It is therefore not the purpose of this study to document these plagues again, or to create a rhetoric of androgyny in their defense. However, while the study does not propound feminism as one of its intents, it is obvious and clear that

this study rests on the above documented effects as a basic understanding. All the participants in our society, men and women alike, have been affected by them. As Wehr (1987) notes,

The themes of sexism, misogyny, and the oppression of women are well-known, although their reality and their seriousness have not been widely acknowledged and accepted in our society. That lack of recognition stems from several sources, but one of the deepest is that sexism constitutes a worldview; that is, it is a "lens" through which one views the world and its rightful order. That a lens may distort is not evident until the world it orders can be compared with the view through another lens--or through no lens. Women rely on the standard Western lens of the world nearly as much as men, since women, like men, have been socialized into acceptable behavior in this society. (pp. 14-15)

One of the functions of establishing the conceptual framework of this study is to clarify the nature of the researcher's lens. It therefore becomes essential to consider broadly the cultural elements that have impacted the researcher's lens, as well as the lens of society in regard to men's and women's issues, even as the elements of the researcher's specific and personal lens are extracted. The societal and cultural issues develop a lens that influences not only the researcher, but also the women who are subjects of the study, and the readers as well.

Wehr explains that androcentrism is probably the most insidious form of sexism, because it creates the potential for annihilating women's sense of self, thus disenfranchising and disempowering them. This insight is particularly germane to this study. The androcentrism inherent in our society has made it potentially very difficult for a woman to rise

to a position of power recognized by society. A classic view espoused by Wollstonecraft (1792) was that women "were made to be loved, and must not aim at respect, lest they should be hunted out of society as masculine" (p. 34). Since this 18th century view has perpetuated almost unchanged until today, women still fear amassing too much power (or respect) because it defeminizes them. Further, since women have participated in this background of beliefs, they have allowed themselves to be disenfranchised and disempowered. Wehr explains:

In Western patriarchy, the sexist worldview has resulted in the oppression of women. The external oppression of women, the visible oppression, often takes the form of exclusion of women from the public realm, the realm that carries prestige and that it takes 'realistic toughness' (a quality 'feminine' women are not likely to have) to manage. Thus women are excluded from government and high-level decision-making, from the top echelons of church and academic institutions, and from political and economic structures. Their exclusion from these quarters further reinforces male dominance there, which feeds women's reluctance to enter these arenas. Certainly some women have entered all of these domains, but the numbers have been so few that they represent a kind of token inclusion. (pp. 16-17)\*

Androcentrism is the habit of thinking from the male perspective. From this perspective, according to Wehr, "the male is the center of experience, and that experience is normative. The male norm parades as universal, and by that norm women are defined as 'other,' not center; as 'object,'

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\*According to Sarantos, this "token inclusion" for women higher education administrators, is 1.1 administrators per institution (1988).

not subject"(p. 16). If indeed the male is the center of experience, then the male view of power is the view by which we are all judging ourselves. It might be helpful to provide as Wehr suggested, another lens, since it is not possible to view power through "no lens."

In a poignant example of how pernicious androcentrism is to the female consciousness, Wehr explains how jarring it is to read a major non-feminist work such as Freud's The Future of an Illusion and jump in and out of the text as the words "man," "men," "people," and "one" sometimes refer to women and sometimes do not. Finally, she despairs, the realization dawns that she is not included at a certain point, and then "that women were not included in what preceded either" (p. 130).

This kind of ongoing exclusion of women from standard historical, psychological, sociological, and other works by the use of the generic "he" has created an unconsciously held belief that women were somehow not there all the time--not a part of those subject areas. The extension of this is that women are somehow less than men. Women who have been unconscious of the messages they have been receiving about their inferiority have not questioned it. Sometimes even when conscious, they have chosen not to challenge it. Wehr analyzes this exclusion:

With sexism as an unconscious, hidden, yet ever present part of the ongoing conversation in this society about the natures of men and women, women imbibe daily messages about their inferiority. They sense that they

risk severe punishment by going against the prevailing ethos. The very worst punishment a society can inflict on its members is exclusion. . . . I think this realization has to be an important part of the analysis of why women themselves 'choose' to internalize a sense of their own inferiority rather than challenging society's mixed message about who they are. . . . (p. 17)

Many studies have demonstrated the results of this choice to be inferior. Tibbetts (1975, 1977) notes that women often choose to be inferior to men because they (a) have been conditioned to believe or feel that they should be inferior to men, (b) are reluctant to appear 'unfeminine,' (c) are not aware that they are choosing to be inferior to men, and (d) do not understand that they have a legitimate complaint about being categorized as second-class.

Tibbetts also finds that masculine characteristics are more highly valued than are feminine characteristics, which may result in women's judging themselves to be inferior to men. She observes that given identical situations, men see their performance as better than women see theirs. Further, men are more likely to credit their successes to their abilities, whereas women are more likely to credit their successes to luck.

Successful women also suffer from negative evaluations from others. Women often fear or avoid reaching their maximum potential because successful and powerful women have been viewed as deviant and asexual (Tibbetts, 1975, 1977). There have been many studies devoted to this so-called "fear of success," notably the Horner studies in 1965 and 1968 (cited



in Winter, 1973). In comparing results of male and female students on the Thematic Apperception Test, Horner concludes that males expressed positive feelings and outlooks about future success. Females, however, cited responses which suggested that excellence and success were associated with a loss of femininity, social rejection, personal and societal destruction. Her research results also indicate that females with a high fear of success perform at significantly lower levels in mixed gender competitive situations. Hoffman (1974) replicates Horner's research, reaching similar conclusions.

### Sex Differences

Hundreds of studies demonstrate that women and men differ significantly in dozens of ways. The problem is not in demonstrating it in the literature, but in making useful this deluge of data--the mere citation of which simply bores and confuses most readers because of its obviousness.

As a general overview, according to McClelland (1964), males are much more assertive than females: physically stronger, more physically active, more violent. Females are more cooperative (interdependent). Interdependence, of course, is not tantamount to weakness, since it involves both nurturing the power of others and depending on them for support. Women are also more tolerant of human differences, more moralistic, more interested in proper social behavior, more willing to be aware of and admit problems in interpersonal

relationships (Lifton, 1964). According to S. M. Jourard (1963), women also tend to disclose more of their secrets to others. McClelland (1964) offers what may be an explanation for this phenomenon when he notes that because women have a more complex interdependent relationship with the world than men, they are more "open" to influence, whereas men are more "closed." Men, he maintains, are more interested in the simple, the direct; women are more interested in the complex, the undefined. He notes that males (from boyhood on) tend to be more interested in things and tasks, females in people and relationships. Perhaps as a consequence of this, males score higher on the quantitative SAT, females on the verbal.

The research into the areas of sex differences has been extensive, particularly by female researchers. Carol Gilligan (1982), In a Different Voice, discusses some of the ways in which the differences between men and women impact on their moral choices. This area of differences is especially significant to this study since power is impacted by an individual's moral choices. Gilligan makes an important point, however, that should not be ignored by any discussion involving gender differences. That point is that the differences to be noted are not connected just to the biological female. There are obvious instances in which a man might think like a woman, and more subtly, there are ways of thinking that men engage in that are similar to women's thinking. It is true that just as there are "two ways of speaking about moral

problems" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 1), for the purposes of this study there are (at least) two ways of speaking about power. It might well be that many males engage effectively in the kinds of power that we will label as "female," and vice versa.

According to Richardson, Donald, and O'Malley (1986), the Buddhist tradition teaches the importance of balancing the masculine and the feminine. Western culture, on the other hand, has seen the masculine and the feminine as antipodal. The Western tradition has been an "either/or" tradition; the Eastern view is a "both/and" view. The Eastern view holds that there are two poles of cosmic energy--positive (yang), masculine, and negative (yin), feminine, representing the light and the dark, the heaven and the earth (p. 11).

Jung describes the feminine as being receptive, passive, subjective and nurturing, while the masculine is rational, spiritual, decisive, and impersonal. The established and ancient stereotypes of men as active, women as receptive, then, trace at least back to Jung. Gilligan and other writers, notably Jung, refer to the passive receptivity of women in the literature, and this seems to mark a weakness in women. Receptivity seems to relate philosophically to the metaphor of a woman's childbearing--a passive receptivity that robs her of her own identity and power.\*

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\*Reflectively, it has been this researcher's observation that there is power resulting from this receptivity, and that passivity is not a necessary part of receptivity.

Jung defined the "feminine" largely in terms of receptivity. Recent critics, notably Wehr in her Jung and Feminism: Liberating Archetypes, and Edward Whitmont in his Symbolic Quest: Basic Concepts of Analytical Psychology, have taken Jung to task for this characterization, calling his works androcentric and misogynic.

Androcentrism and misogyny distort Jung's discussions of women, the anima and the animus, and the feminine. As a result, Jung's individuation process itself may be skewed for women. The infiltration of Jung's cultural and gender bias is deep enough that analytical psychology, as a body of theory, does not contain an adequate definition of women and the feminine on terms that substantiate women's 'consciousness-raised' experience. (Wehr, 1987, p. 99)\*

Edward Whitmont (1982), a Jungian analyst and critic, refers in Return of the Goddess to a recently and perhaps still existing androlatric system of the patriarchal Western culture in which the qualities of men are valued, even revered, and the qualities of women are denigrated.

Males could compensate for the loss of natural and instinctual connectedness by means of increasing reliance upon ego-rationality, achievement, power and control. Women, however, were denied equal rights in the power-competition game. They came to feel themselves more and more cut off from their natural selves and hemmed-in. . . . Indirect assertion by playful or flirtatious seductiveness . . . also came to be considered inferior, if not detestable, in the androlatric system. Consequently, this form of feminine assertiveness turned out to be insufficient for enhancing women's self-respect. Small

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\*Not all women, it should be noted to be fair, find Jung's theories fraught with misogyny and androcentrism. In fact, according to Wehr (1987), "Jungian women . . . believe receptivity is a quality much needed in the world, and that it is a form of empowerment" (p. 6).

wonder, then, that the dammed-up energies gather themselves in the forms of depressive self-hate, of resentment against the world of men, and a competitive imitation of masculine behavior. (p. 185)

The connectedness that Whitmont maintains has been lost from our culture is ironically touted as a female value by Gilligan and others. If, as Whitmont maintains, negative and competitive female imitation of masculine behavior (and values, and definitions) result from an inappropriate channeling of female assertiveness, then finding the essence of the female values, experiences, and definitions would be an important early step in freeing our culture from the linguistic bondage of androcentrism that he, Wehr, and others decry. It would then be possible for women and men to pursue power and assertiveness with enhanced options.

The androlatric system described by Whitmont is our heritage. It does not automatically necessitate a misogynic rejection of the woman's way. Because the system is apparently at odds with the women's way, however, a selected misogyny has seemed to develop. Whitmont makes a case for a return to feminine (if not feminist) ways of thinking for both men and women. There is, he maintains, a powerful alternative to androlatry, and it is not necessarily the androgyny that might be threatening and offensive to both men and women. In fact, Whitmont does not suggest the feminization of men any more than he suggests the masculinization of women. The answer might be, to paraphrase Gilligan, to recognize that

there are two ways of speaking about power. Recognizing and understanding all the options will further empower both men and women.

Stearns' (1978) book of readings on the advancement of women in the 19th and 20th centuries provides an analysis of the social progress of women, and of the society's views of men and women, and of the status of the sexist worldview, in its conclusion:

Feminists are inclined to stress how male modernization, though perhaps unsuccessful in leaving men dependent on a host of machismo devices and lusts for power, shunted women aside. From something like partners, women became home bodies, excluded from equal political power or even any political power at all and paid, if working, inferior salaries for inferior jobs. . . . Women were truncated beings, compelled to glorify only their functions as wife and mother.

But another school of thought suggests that women met change more constructively than men. Insofar as they were able to preserve and build on certain traditions, such as working mainly at home whether formally employed or not, they were luckier and/or smarter than men, who more thoroughly faced an unfamiliar, cold world outside the family. . . .

. . . Were male wage advantages, admittedly present and hotly defended, suitable to compensate for the felt need to yield more and more of the home, of the raising of the children, to women?\*

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\*It is true that a lot of these points depend on perceptions and values. It is because we value work outside the home and work-for-hire more highly than we do domestic work that we have assumed that the male activities in our culture are the more powerful ones. It would be possible to imagine a different culture in which our women would be perceived to be more powerful because they had control over the child-rearing practices, and thus over future generations. It is only because we have culturally and socially decided not to perceive it that way that we do not do so. This is dependent on a male norm which may have been developed as self-esteem protection after men were "banished" from the home. Ellen

Or when men do indeed seem to gain, does this mean that women somehow lose?

One does not have to view history in competitive gender terms: when man is up, woman is down and vice versa. Ultimately the current debates in women's history are of interest in shedding light on the human, not just the female, condition. . . . The balance struck by men and by women may have differed; traditions themselves differed. But the modern man is not totally different from the modern woman either in greater power and happiness or in greater unhappiness. He cannot be, for modern history has intertwined the fates of men and women with fully as much complexity as ever before. (Stearns, 1978, pp. 63-65)

Not all researchers have been so egalitarian in their conclusions. A classic discussion that resulted in the assertion that women were superior to men was Ashley Montagu's The Natural Superiority of Women. Although Montagu himself noted that women would be the first to deny his title, probably in the interest of maintaining harmony, but also out of a genuine noncompetitive belief in the worth of both genders, Montagu maintained that

The one thing we may be certain women will never do is to lord it over men as men have for so long lorded it over them. The truly superior person doesn't need to lord it over anyone; it is only the inferior person who, in order to feel that he is superior, must have someone to look down on. (1974, pp. 9-10)

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Goodman wrote a column in June 1988 about how women are giving up their power to men, now that men are entering the homeplace, so to speak, which is certainly a way to perceive it. Ashley Montagu noted that

. . . in the fundamental role in which we would have thought it all too obviously clear that women were the superiors of men, namely, in their ability to bear and bring up children, women have been made to feel that their roles are handicapping ones. (p. 16)

. . . By turning capacities into handicaps, not only can one make their possessors feel inferior, but anyone lacking such capacities can then feel superior for very lack of them. (p. 18)

### Women Administrators in Higher Education

A particular aspect of our cultural perspective that is pertinent to this study is the cultural view of women administrators in higher education. Despite the fact that women and men have similar profiles of power and achievement needs (Harlan & Weiss, 1981), there are few women in higher education administration, particularly in senior positions. In most colleges and universities, the top four administrative positions--president, provost, chief fiscal officer, and dean--are held by men (Sandler, 1979). Women are more likely to be "tracked" into administrative staff positions, whereas men are more prevalent in line positions (Polley, 1978). This limits the opportunities for these women to provide leadership to subordinates and influence policy at their institutions. According to Napierkowski (1983),

In view of [the] statistics, it is not surprising that despite attempts to prove otherwise, there is an underlying assumption in the literature that women are not effective leaders. (p. 19)

Sandler (1986) and Sarantos (1988) agree.

This person-centered (rather than culture-centered or organization-centered) approach, of course, removes the "blame" for women's lack of representation from the culture and the organization and places it on the women themselves. This approach maintains that much female behavior is maladaptive in organizations; one example of this maladaptive female behavior is the fairly typical "accommodative style" of women,



which is seen as not assertive enough. Hennig and Jardim (1977) and Harragan (1977) have said that women are not properly socialized for work and must receive extensive training in management to succeed. One of the greatest areas for training is in assertiveness: women are simply perceived as not assertive enough. Assertiveness is perceived as necessary for leadership.

There is a subtle but obvious connection between leadership and power. A person in a leadership position has an opportunity to use interpersonal power as the situation requires. Kanter (1977) and Hersey and Blanchard (1980) have related leadership to the use of interpersonal power. The relationship between administration and leadership is less subtle and more obvious. According to Hodgkinson (1983), administration is leadership and leadership is administration.

The words "planning," "organizing," "directing," and "controlling" have been used over the years to define the term "managing," but "leadership" has been more subtle and elusive. Rather than defining leadership, people have tended to analyze and categorize its various styles, all of which relate to the process of relating to and developing followers. Hunsaker and Hunsaker (1986) define leadership as "communicating the what and how of job assignments to subordinates and motivating them to do the things necessary to achieve organizational objectives" (p. 37). According to this mandate, leadership is an interpersonal act involving a mutual

contribution between the organization and the individual. According to Sarantos (1988), "The effective leader . . . is able to persuade others to work enthusiastically and competently in an atmosphere which is conducive to attaining predetermined organizational objectives" (p. 30).

Josefowitz (cited in Sarantos, 1988) describes the connection between leadership and power in this way: Leadership is the process of influencing, power is the capacity to influence, and authority is the power to exercise leadership. This circular connection (authority is the capacity to influence the process of influencing) demonstrates enigmatically that power is inherently and inseparably connected to both authority and leadership. Because leadership is viewed as an area where women are ill-trained and perhaps even ill-suited, our cultural view of appropriate leader behavior is typically male, assertive behavior.

Napierkowski (1983) alludes to the androcentric expectations which control our perceptions of appropriate leadership traits as being more typically male and less typically female:

One cannot conclude that there are actual differences in leader behavior . . . but stereotypical expectations on the part of others may be hypothesized. Also, the model of the effective leader against which women are compared . . . may have been constructed along the lines of sex-role expectations without careful scrutiny of actual behaviors. (p. 21)

Overall, she concludes, there is no clear picture of leadership as it relates to women. She labels the research as

"conflicting and inconclusive." She considers Sargent's suggestion that an "androgynous" approach to leadership would be best: both sensitive to situational cues (feminine) and assertive (masculine). She remarks that Hersey and Blanchard's situational approach to leadership, combining concern for relationships (feminine) and concern for task accomplishment (male) is similar to Sargent's suggestion, but she notes at last that these models have not either one been examined with respect to women. The literature specifically addressing the issues of women and leadership within our culture has been as sparse as has the representation of the women in the relevant positions.

Even though very few women are administrators in senior-level positions, however, feminine styles of leadership have crept into the literature. One characteristic of female administrative style is that more women tend to prefer a "Theory Y", a more participatory and collaborative style, according to McGregor's delineation, than prefer a "Theory X", a more controlling style. In an Oklahoma University study of 126 top-level women administrators, more women in all regions of the country and of all ages tended to prefer McGregor's Theory Y to Theory X (McCorkle, 1974).

Loden (1985) defines female leadership style as "a style of managing that utilizes the full range of women's natural talents and abilities" (p. 61). She contends that women are able to rely on emotional as well as rational data, to respond

to events simultaneously on thinking and feeling levels

(p. 61). The following is Loden's Feminine Leadership Model:

Operating Style: Cooperative  
Organizational Structure: Team  
Basic Objective: Quality Output  
Problem-Solving Style: Intuitive/Rational  
Key Characteristics: Lower Control, Emphatic, Collaborative, High Performance Standards. (p. 63)

Generally, however, according to Reed (1983), perceptions of feminine styles are variously negative (p. 36). Still, our century has produced women who are evaluated as having basically feminine styles and still being very effective leaders, such as Indira Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Thatcher, and others. However, the majority of female leaders are still relegated to the helping professions such as student services, home economics, nursing, etc., keeping in line with the "stereotypes of feminine interest in the helping role" (Sandler, 1986, p. 25). While women in educational administration have chosen a nontraditional female role, they may have advanced to it through more traditional female roles such as teaching, nursing, social work, counseling, library, and secretarial work.

Women administrators in higher education comprise a very small percentage of total administrators in higher education. Above the level of dean the percentage is even smaller, about 1%, according to Sarantos (1988). In fact, on the average, colleges and universities nationwide employ only about one woman above the level of dean (Sandler, 1986). Women who

are in positions above the level of dean are in a position to have and use power. In fact, power differences are generally perceived as organizational, not personal, and the source of power is generally perceived to be the organization (Kanter, 1977; Sagaria, 1980). Organizationally, for many women, this is a new experience, and for the women who are experiencing this new role, there have been few or no role models on which they could pattern their behavior (Belenky et al., 1986; Carlson, 1983; Kanter, 1977, 1979). Furthermore, there has been a pattern of the culture that has prohibited women from having or using power fully, or at least as fully as their male counterparts. Marshall (1984) writes that more women than ever before are enrolling in higher education administration programs to earn doctorates and other credentials. But they are more likely than men to choose other careers than college administration (p. 4). Sarantos (1988) suggests that a reason for this is the lack of female role models, and the assumption that they have little chance of achieving an upper administrative level (p. 41).

In every organization, women as well as men have aspired to the top hierarchical positions, but according to Adams (1979), it is more difficult for women than it is for men, because reaching a power position calls her womanhood into question. "What kind of real woman" is she? (p. 5). Has she changed into something else? Horner's notion is that women have motives to avoid success, including the feeling or fear that they might be considered less than feminine,

or that they might be rejected by men (Deaux, 1976, p. 49). Dowling (1981) echoes this sentiment, and refers to this notion as "The Cinderella Complex" which she believes is a complex psychological dependency--"a deep wish to be taken care of by others" (p. 31)--that holds women back in a kind of "half-light, retreating from the full use of their minds and creativity" (p. 31).

Women in top level administration have added challenges to their leadership because they are in the minority. A questionnaire printed in Working Woman magazine which received 1500 responses pointed out the isolation of powerful corporate women, nearly one-third of whom had no other women at their level. The majority had fewer than 15% female colleagues. Many of these women reported having used specialist positions to gain entree to the power arena, and many reported still having low organizational power (Brown & Kagan, 1982, pp. 92-97).

If women have been under-researched in the broad areas of leadership, they have been particularly under-researched in the specific area of power. Margaret Carlson (1983) points out:

Because of their marginal representation in the administrative hierarchy, relatively little has been known about female leaders in higher education until the last decade. Following the passage of affirmative action and equal opportunity legislation in the late 1960's and early 1970's, the academic woman became the target of much inquiry. These research efforts focused on a variety of issues: descriptive profiles, leadership styles, achievement motivation, career patterns, training programs, and job satisfaction. But research on academic

women and power has been almost nonexistent. When power has been addressed, it has generally been a subproblem of a larger research question. As a result, very little scholarly information is known about academic women and power. (p. 131)

### Conclusion

The point of discussing these androcentric (if not androlatric) phenomena in our culture is to allow for the exploration of the subject of this study with the understanding that we have been and are influenced (all of us, male and female, as members of the Western culture) by this kind of androcentric thinking. It pervades our language and our worldview to the extent that even the women who would rise to power, and the men who would help them, are influenced by it. Sexism is a worldview, a culture, an agreement, an imperative: it is so habituated that even among its users it goes unnoticed.\* In the words of Ashley Montagu, "In the politics of sex, most men have been Tories" (1974, p. 3). I would suggest that because of a shared worldview, many women, too, have unconsciously been Tories, even if they have not always been allowed to vote.

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\*As an analogy, I remember in 1969 when I became educated to the dietary dangers of white sugar. As I tried to eliminate it from my diet, to my astonishment and horror I found it in everything: catsup, green beans, baby food, apple juice, corn bread mix, and the list is literally endless. Sexism is like that. Because sexism pervades our language like sugar pervades processed food, one must be a diligent and relentless detective to uncover it. And because sexism and androcentrism result in misogyny and oppression, just as a diet of white sugar results in poor mental and physical health, it is incumbent upon us to increase our awareness so that we will have other options.

Marilyn French (1985) summarizes the prejudicial result against women of cultural perceptions in an androcentric society:

It is claimed by some that feminism creates a male backlash against women; but no one can point to a culture in which women are subordinate yet are treated well. . . . Whatever position women occupy in a society, men experience them as threatening; however great men's control they do not feel in control. (p. 535)

Marilyn French contends that "women are trained for private virtue [and] men for public power" (p. 534). According to Sarantos (1988),

Men may concede control to superior men, but never to women. . . . When women take control, they are viewed with some animosity, but if men do not take control, they are viewed with contempt. (p. 46)

Although women have aspired to power and leadership, they have statistically been denied equal participation in senior administrative roles in higher education administration. The ones who have achieved the ranks of senior administration have faced the obstacles of having their womanhood questioned and of having their power challenged or denied. Nevertheless, some women have advanced to the senior ranks, and have set the flag of female influence. They have not had it easy.



Women's Ways of Perceiving Things

*Pride*

Even rocks crack, I tell you,  
 and not because of age.  
 For years they lie on their backs  
 in the heat and the cold,  
 so many years,  
 it almost seems peaceful.  
 They don't move, so the cracks stay hidden.  
 A kind of pride.  
 Years pass over them, waiting.  
 Whoever is going to shatter them  
 hasn't come yet.  
 And so the moss flourishes, the seaweed swirls,  
 the sea pushes through and rolls back,  
 and it seems they are motionless.  
 Till a little seal comes to rub against the rocks,  
 comes and goes away.  
 And suddenly the stone is split.  
 I told you, when rocks crack it happens by surprise  
 And people, too.

--Dahlia Ravikovitch  
 Israel (b. 1936)

Translated from the Hebrew by Chana Bloch

In describing a woman's way of power, it is difficult to avoid cliches and stereotypes; it is likewise difficult to avoid qualifying every statement with a 'perhaps' or an exception. A researcher must tread a loose tightrope, teetering between too much and too little, balancing precariously between dogmatism and vacuity. One must not waffle on the issues, and yet one must not be fanatical: One must not offend the establishment, lest one's ideas be rejected.

The kind of thinking in the above paragraph is typical female thinking. Whereas a male thought pattern might be more inclined to proudly assert different ideas, and the

establishment be damned, a female pattern of thinking would demonstrate, in the words of Mary Belenky and others (1986) that "even when the women held strongly to their own way of doing things, they remained concerned about not hurting the feelings of their opponents by openly expressing dissent" (p. 84). Even though this passage by Belenky refers specifically to only one type of woman who is at the level of subjective knowledge, or the quest for self, there are parallels here that reflect all women. There are ways in which the caring and connectedness discussed by Gilligan make this tempered approach a natural female one. This does not imply that women are not thoughtful, as Jung had suggested when he propounded their deficient Logos. It simply suggests that they are willing and inclined to consider more than one view.

The power of this way of thinking is that it does consider a fuller picture--a wider choice with more options. The powerlessness of this position, of course, is that it frequently loses followers in its apparent lack of fanaticism, sometimes labeled as weakness, and it sometimes even loses its own proponents by its paralysis of analysis. Mary McCarthy, in Memories of a Catholic Girlhood, captures this dilemma:

I felt caught in a dilemma that was new to me then but which since has become horribly familiar: the trap of adult life, in which you are held, wriggling, powerless to act because you can see both sides. On that occasion, as generally in the future, I compromised. (Gilligan, 1982, p. 156)

Compromise is very frequently the answer of the female, who must be the harmonizer, the mediator, the conciliator. The question that serious researchers must address as they consider men's and women's issues is whether there is a different kind of power operating in this strategy. Is there power in cooperation, in acceptance, in compromise?

Partly because of their values and beliefs, women do not perceive things the same way men do. Karen Horney (1967) was one of the earliest critics to point out, in a criticism of the Freudian model, that women's psychology is DIFFERENT from men's. It follows, therefore, that criticism and theory of women based on the male Freudian model is bound to be suspect, if not downright glib. A problem with traditional masculinity/femininity scales, in fact, has been that they have just measured dominance and self-assertion on the one hand and nurturance and interpersonal warmth on the other. These qualities have then been labeled as masculine and feminine, but masculinity and femininity are multidimensional qualities that include much more than just dominance and nurturance. This kind of thinking has resulted more often than not in women's being judged on the basis of male characteristics. David McClelland (1964) pointed out that

Women are perceived as the opposite of men. This is possibly the psychologist's fault because if a judge wants to describe a woman as 'not strong,' he [or she?] must place a check mark closer to its polar opposite, WEAK. Yet a woman may obviously be 'not strong' without being WEAK. In fact, the STRONG-WEAK dimension may simply

not apply to her at all. It is useful in describing male behavior, however. So she is commonly dragged in and placed somewhere on it, not only by the psychologists, but by the man [or woman?] on the street. . . . She is perceived in terms of where she stands on a male characteristic. (p. 173)

In fact, this experience of being measured on a male scale is so inherent in the female experience that women may not recognize that this is what is happening to them. As Dale Spender points out, "women's meanings and experience have been omitted or excised from the culture's meanings." It is possible, for example, for women to "feel strong and autonomous but with no means of representing this concept through language (there are no words for women's strength . . .); they cannot VOICE that strength and autonomy." Because of their not being able to put it into words, "they may even begin to doubt the validity of the concept for women" (1984, pp. 200, 201). Spender goes on to point out that "women can only aspire to be as good as a man; there is no point in trying to be as good as a woman" (p. 201).

This leaves women in the precarious position of having no way to validate their own experience. In a curious double-bind, if they use the standards of the dominant white-male culture, their evaluation is, of course, negative. If they use their own standard, however, the standard itself has no validity, so even a positive measure is a negative rating because the scale itself may be evaluated negatively by the dominant white male culture.

Dale Spender discusses the impact of this dilemma in "Defining Reality" (1984). Spender asks what the implications are for a man when a woman asserts that there is "something WRONG with a man" who cannot accept that a woman's view of the world is authentic.

What are the implications for men when women insist that men and male power are a problem; when to men it does not feel as though their sex and their power are a problem? They may be discomfitted by this assertion, they may be confused, they may even feel that they are being confronted with a double-bind; for, if they accept the authenticity of women's experience, then they accept that their sex and their power constitutes a problem. Yet, if they deny the validity of women's assertions and dispute that their sex and power is a problem, they are doing nothing other than demonstrating . . . the precise problem. . . .

. . . And if men feel the constraints of this double-bind . . . while this may be an isolated and novel experience for men, it is the daily reality of women's lives. Women can know what it is like to be damned if they agree with the prevailing definitions of womanhood, and damned if they disagree. (p. 202)

Anne Wilson Schaeff discusses this double-bind in Women's Reality: An Emerging Female System in a White Male Society (1985). She notes how very important fairness is as a value to women. Because of this, women must believe that the system within which they are operating is fair to them or they are consumed with anger and rage. The anger and rage that consumes them is directly born out of their impotence (lack of a way to use power) in functioning within an unfair system. (See also Whitmont, 1982). According to the psychological metaphor used to explain the theory propounded by Schaeff, women within the "White Male System" are burdened by the

"Original Sin of Being Born Female," and look to the system and to the males within it to rescue them and to treat them fairly. When this does not happen, they channel their rage. This channeling may take many courses, one of which is super-competence. In this mode, a woman sets herself up above other women, using her competence against other women as a demonstration that the White Male System is working for her and venting her "rage by exercising her power over others"

(p. 44).\*

A time-honored technique for dealing with impotence within the White Male System mentioned by Mary Wollstonecraft (1795) is manipulation of powerful males, but this requires a sacrifice of integrity that Wollstonecraft found unacceptable, even in 1792.

Women . . . sometimes boast of their weakness, cunningly obtaining power by playing on the weakness of men; and they may well glory in their illicit sway, for . . . they have more real power than their masters: but virtue is sacrificed to temporary gratifications, and the respectability of life to the triumph of an hour.  
(p. 40)

Other channels include seduction, passive dependency, chemical dependency, depression, malice directed toward other women and designed to win male approval, and martyrdom. Women who choose these techniques are letting the anger of being

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\*Note that this kind of out-of-control destructive "power" results from impotence, not from a feeling of real power, and is unusual in womanly actions. Typically, as has been noted elsewhere in this study, women have such a strong mandate against hurting others that they will usually channel their destructive rages inward rather than outward.

judged by male standards run their lives. According to Schaeff (1985), "They are simply doing their best to cope with a culture which labels them as innately inferior and denies any direct or healthy outlet for the anger that results from the inequity or [sic] their position" (p. 46).

The problem of a woman's trying to find an outlet for her power in white male society is exacerbated by the quality of a woman that requires her to hold as an ideal the requirement of non-violence. Gilligan (1982) clarifies a woman's dilemma as

the conflict between compassion and autonomy, between virtue and power--which the feminine voice struggles to resolve in its effort to reclaim the self and to solve the moral problem in such a way that no one is hurt.  
(p. 71)

But a woman has to find a legitimate outlet for her power, or it will, as Schaeff noted, degenerate into destructive rage. Because of this frustration in finding a proper outlet, power and rage become almost an equation, making the use of either one frightening.

The societal belief in the Original Sin of Being Born Female has created women's distrust of power in themselves and in other women. We also fear our use of power because it so readily combines with our unexpressed rage and becomes terrifying to ourselves and those around us. (Schaeff, 1985, p. 46)

Miller (1986) echoes the theories of Schaeff (1985) and Whitmont (1982) when she notes that some women may still try to "mimic the dominant group by finding gross or subtle ways to dissociate themselves from women." For example, professional women can "emphasize their professional status as a

means of distancing themselves from 'just women'; they use individual distinctions to try to escape from being a woman, a second class person" (p. 136).

Women aspiring to positions of power in American society, then, have a real personal and cultural challenge dealing with white male standards, restrictions, and contradictions. There have been attempts to remeasure women since their entry into the power arena.

In 1974, for example, Bem introduced the concept of androgyny, used to refer to those men and women who possess both masculine and feminine qualities in relatively equal proportion, a concept which has been widely debated and criticized. Someone who measures high on both masculine and feminine scales has been labeled "androgynous," which really demonstrates little about their masculinity or femininity, but yet which has been used as a facile argument to minimize sex differences. This kind of circular argument concerning the nature of sex differences contributes little to the research about the nature of women or their experiences. In fact, it may have put more pressure on women to try to be more "like men." Recent research has instead included qualitative studies that have probed the essence of women's ways of knowing and perceiving things, which studies have contributed more significantly to the possibilities for research into real sex differences, and which genre this study modestly intends to emulate.



One of the landmark qualitative studies of women is Carol Gilligan's In a Different Voice (1982). Gilligan argues for different sequences of moral development in men and women, for the most part describing separation and individuation as male and attachment and caring as female. She refers to the "age-old split between thinking and feeling, justice and mercy, that underlies many of the cliches and stereotypes concerning the difference between the sexes" (p. 69).

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) note, however, that "Separation and individuation can leave women feeling vulnerable and unconnected" (p. 65). The caring and connection required for women often provides a legitimate route for their development and use of their own power.

Women typically approach adulthood with the understanding that the care and empowerment of others is central to their life's work. Through listening and responding, they draw out the voices and minds of those they help raise up. In the process, they often come to hear, value, and strengthen their own voices and minds as well. (p. 48)

Central to Gilligan's study is the absolute of care, operating through and with other motives and needs in a woman's development.

In women's development, the absolute of care, defined initially as not hurting others, becomes complicated through a recognition of the need for personal integrity. This recognition gives rise to the claim for equality embodied in the concept of rights, which changes the understanding of relationships and transforms the definition of care. . . . Then the awareness of multiple truths leads to a relativizing of equality in the direction of equity and gives rise to an ethic of generosity and care. (p. 166)

This ethic of generosity and care characterizes an important quality in the motivation and values of women, that relationships are central not only to development and progress, but also to day-to-day self-affirmation and belief. One cannot operate out of an ethic of generosity and care except in the context of relationships and connections.

Gilligan notes that in her analysis of the women's comments, identity is defined in contexts of relationships and connections. Men's comments on the other hand replaced the women's verbs of attachment with adjectives of separation-- "intelligent," "logical," "imaginative," "honest," sometimes even "arrogant" and "cocky" (pp. 160, 161). Gilligan notes for women the "fusion of identity and intimacy," so that self-descriptions of highly successful and achieving women mention relationships: mother, wife, child, lover. These women measured their strength in terms of the activity of their attachments: "giving to," "helping out," "being kind," "not hurting," and viewed the conflict they experienced between achievement and caring as feeling divided or betrayed (p. 159).

Gilligan says that in fact male-female judgments issue from different premises.

The ethic of justice [the male ethic] proceeds from the premise of equality--that everyone should be treated the same--an ethic of care [the female ethic] rests on the premise of nonviolence--that no one should be hurt.  
(Bracey, 1984, p. 69)

Indeed, Gilligan views the whole of women's development as a conflict between integrity and care, a dilemma of constant compromise between the certainty of beliefs and the complication of attachments. One of Gilligan's interviewees captures this dilemma when she characterizes morality as a consciousness of power, as

a type of consciousness, a sensitivity to humanity, that you can affect someone else's life, you can affect your own life, and you have a responsibility not to endanger other people's lives or to hurt other people. So morality is complex; I'm being very simplistic. Morality involves realizing that there is an interplay between self and other and that you are going to have to take responsibility for both of them. I keep using that word RESPONSIBILITY; it's just sort of a consciousness of your influence over what's going on. (p. 139)

So morality is tied to an awareness of power, but there is an accompanying responsibility not to hurt others. The dilemma emerges again. In the words of Gilligan, "The moral ideal is not cooperation or interdependence but rather the fulfillment of an obligation, the repayment of a debt, by giving to others without taking anything for oneself" (p. 139). In fact, the connection to others is so real that a woman must actually develop to the point where she can consider herself equally important as a responsibility. According to Belenky and others (1986),

Gilligan believes that for people operating within a responsibility orientation, the initiation of actions on behalf of the self signifies the transition into mature moral thought, a late-occurring developmental shift in which the self is included as an equal claimant in any moral decision. (p. 77)

In reference to this reduced sense of self, Wehr (1987) suggests that women are not strongly based in the ego (sense of self, personal agency, etc.). Feminist theorists such as Jean Baker Miller suggest an enormous difference between male and female ego (p. 101).

Because of the perceived danger inherent in power of damage to oneself or others, a resulting ambivalence toward power has emerged in many women. One of Gilligans' subjects feared power because she saw the acquisition of adult power as requiring the sacrifice of feminine sensitivity and compassion.

To be ambitious means to be power hungry and insensitive (Why insensitive?) Because people are stomped on in the process. A person on the way up stomps on people, whether it is family or other colleagues or clientele. (Inevitably?) Not always, but I have seen it so often in my limited years of working that it is scary because I don't want to change like that. (p. 97)

Women absolutely require connections; they absolutely require intimacy, in order to identify themselves as effective human agents. Gilligan notes that although Erikson had observed that "for women, identity has as much to do with intimacy as with separation, this observation is not integrated into his developmental chart" (p. 98).

The male paradigm has concentrated more on rights and justice and fairness (equality) than on compassion, responsibility, care, and generosity. According to Belenky and others (1986):

People operating within a rights morality--more commonly men--evoke the metaphor of "blind justice" and rely on abstract laws and universal principles to adjudicate disputes and conflicts between conflicting claims impersonally, impartially, and fairly. Those operating within a morality of responsibility and care--primarily women--reject the strategy of blindness and impartiality. Instead, they argue for an understanding of the context for moral choice, claiming that the needs of individuals cannot always be deduced from general rules and principles and that moral choice must also be determined inductively from the particular experiences each participant brings to the situation. . . . It is the rejection of blind impartiality in the application of universal abstract rules and principles that has, in the eyes of many, marked women as deficient in moral reasoning. (p. 8)

Gilligan does not label this difference in moral reasoning as a deficiency, however. She says that the "greater orientation toward relationships and interdependence implies a more contextual mode of judgment and a different moral understanding" (p. 22).

Belenky et al. (1986) see the contextual mode of judgment and the difference in moral reasoning as contributing to a basically nonjudgmental stance on the part of women.

Women seem to take naturally a nonjudgmental stance. In teaching undergraduates we have found it necessary to ask many of the males to refrain from making judgments until they understood the topic. On the other hand, we have often had to prod the females into critical examination: Even when they disagreed vehemently with an opinion, they hesitated to judge it wrong until they had tried hard to understand the reasoning behind it. (p. 116)

The nonjudgmental stance that women take has caused them to suffer a myriad of additional unfavorable labels, including passive, non-thinking, or indecisive. "It is easy to condemn women's refusal to make judgments as evidence of passivity or

absence of agency . . . but, as the philosopher Carol McMillan (1982) reminds us, 'Agency need not involve control over events'" (p. 131). McMillan quotes the philosopher Georg von Wright: "Action has a 'passive' counterpart which is usually called forbearance. Forbearance can be distinguished from mere passivity, not acting, by being intentional passivity" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 117).

The difference in the basic ethic for women as being one of care rather than justice is intrinsically connected to women's ways of thinking. To the extent that care requires compassion and emotion rather than impartiality and objectivity, this makes sense. Since the time of Jung and before, women have been categorized as being more feeling-oriented and less thinking-oriented. According to Belenky et al. (1986),

The mental processes that are involved in considering the abstract and the impersonal have been labeled "thinking" and are attributed primarily to men, while those that deal with the personal and interpersonal fall under the rubric of "emotions" and are largely relegated to women. (p. 7)

Because of their natural commitment to the feeling processes, women have been labeled as deficient in the thinking processes. According to Jung's model, one cannot think and feel at the same time or intuit and sense at the same time (Wehr, 1987, p. 45). According to Jung, feeling is the process of valuing and is the primary function of women (Wehr, p. 46). Jung says women are the weakest at thinking (Wehr, p. 47).

To demonstrate women's weakness in thinking, Jung says men always understand the "anima," but women have trouble understanding the "animus." This he attributes to their difficulty with the thinking function (and perhaps also to the lack of a female soul) (Wehr, 1987, p. 65), but it may be simply because this is a male concept that doesn't exist for the female.

Since there are value judgments attached by the prevailing (male) power structure to a person's performance in these various areas, a woman's greater tendency toward intuition and feeling rather than toward sensory data and thinking has added additional negative evaluations. These evaluations, as has been noted in the previous section, demonstrate a basic androcentric bias in the Western culture.

It is generally assumed that intuitive knowledge is more primitive, therefore less valuable, than so-called objective modes of knowing. . . . Recent feminist writers have convincingly argued that there is a masculine bias at the very heart of most academic disciplines, methodologies, and theories. (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 6)

This male bias is subtle, reflecting belief "that conceptions of knowledge and truth that are accepted and articulated today have been shaped throughout history by the male-dominated majority culture" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 5).

Women are clearly different. It is not just a masculine/feminine differentiation between male and female virtues and strengths, although those of course are numerous, but it is a statement that women think differently from men, and that just delimiting male/female differences by predominantly male

standards is not enough to clarify the nature of women. "Difference," according to Jean Baker Miller (1986), is still interpreted as deficiency, and deficiency is the organizing principle in the dominant-subordinate relationship, and a resulting fallacy is the deficiency/non-deficiency fallacy-- a mistaken notion that the subordinates have deficiencies and the dominants do not (p. 137).

In a qualitative study designed to explore the nature of personal power for women, Ellen Harrison Barnett (1981) conducted in-depth interviews with 10 women which yielded the following definition of the experience of personal power:

faith in one's ability to determine the course of one's own life; awareness of one's capabilities and talents; economic self-sufficiency; self-respect and expectation of respect from others; lessened dependence on external affirmation; and emotional resiliency. (DAI 41A, p. 5017).

Although the population for Barnett's study was low-income single mothers who were seeking self-sufficiency through higher education, the definition still offers insights for the current study. It is remarkable that no element of competition is present. Although the key ingredient would be indicated to be independence, the kinds of independence noted are the kinds that many men already take for granted: economic and decisional.

It is often suggested that one reason women are not as aggressively powerful as men is that they have a lower self-image, and much psychotherapy is directed toward improving their self-image. Juliet Blair (1985) suggests that



Because most cultures use the metaphor of the male God-head to legitimate male control of earthly objects, their women are led to internalise a self-image in which their natural purpose is read as the primary and ultimate bearers and carers of life. This cosmological task is defined as inferior. . . . Prevented from operating [with] the same ethical values as their men, their minds and bodies mediate the pain caused to them and others by the limited moral responsibility required of men whose goals must be competitive and instrumental. (pp. 323-334)

Thus women have always been somehow the keepers of the moral integrity of a culture. Carl Degler (1980), At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present, noted that women have been placed in charge, culturally, of an ideological framework that included religious activity and social and community caring. Women have since the 18th century been tacitly assumed to be in charge of the moral reform movements including anti-slavery, temperance, anti-prostitution, and other social reforms. Today this is still the case, with the emphasis on women's involvement in anti-drug and drinking campaigns, sexually transmitted disease education programs, and global hunger and anti-war campaigns. In spite of all the women's movements for equality, few women have ever argued that women were the SAME as men: The issues have always been different just as men and women are different.

Both McClelland and Erik Erikson discussed the relationship of anatomical and physiological functions to the celebrated differences between men and women. The physiological metaphor for women, of course, is painful menstruation and

childbirth, and uncomfortable menopause, all of which the woman learns to survive and frequently with the promise of better things to come. In David McClelland's research on power using the Thematic Apperception Test, he noted a clear difference between male and female stories, in that the female stories were characterized by this quality of survival of the bad times, usually with the promise of better things to come existing hopefully in the future. This is countered by the typical male stories which are characterized by an Icarus quality--an assertive rise which, if it is followed by a fall, is usually terminal. The physiological metaphor mentioned by McClelland in his discussion of these stories is the obvious phallic one (cited in Lifton, 1964).

Another quality of the nature of women noted by McClelland in his limited studies of women is the part-time quality of their lives. He discusses the full-fledged feminine strengths "working with people, taking account of context, doing many things at once, all part-time" (cited in Lifton, p. 187).

He notes the particular application of this phenomenon in reference to the type of women included in this study.

Nowhere is this [part-time quality] more evident than in the study of the lives of outstanding women. Consider the scholars at the Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study. They are selected for intellectual excellence, but what is surprising about them--to the male, anyway, who can accomplish something only by concentrating--is HOW MANY DIFFERENT THINGS they do well. (cited in Lifton, p. 188)

While women have certainly had to lead part-time lives such as these described by McClelland, one pitfall that has felled some women is the attempt to do all of these activities full-time, resulting in what Marjorie Hansen Shaevitz called the "Superwoman Syndrome." The woman who is victimized by the Superwoman Syndrome may actually have the potential of being an outstanding woman, a powerful woman, but because she is under the impression that she HAS to do it all, and do it all well, she prohibits herself from excelling in any one aspect of her life and creates tremendous stress, all of which combined prevent her from succeeding and becoming outstanding or powerful. At the beginning of the woman's movement in the 1960's and 70's, there were many cliches, commercials, and songs that popularized this notion: The Enjoli Woman, a commercial loosely borrowed from a song that said "I can bring home the bacon, fry it up in a pan, and never let you forget you're a man," for example, touted the notion that the superwoman could simultaneously be an effective career woman, homemaker, and sexpot. The cliché that was widely distributed on coffee cups and cardboard posters said, "A woman must work twice as hard and accomplish twice as much as a man to be judged half as good--Fortunately, this is not difficult." All of this rhetoric was hype, designed by the existing establishment of which women were of course a part. It was designed to increase women's self-esteem, to let them know they were worthy, but the backlash was that many women

began to think that they HAD to do all that in order to be worthy, so the hype ended up not empowering women as it was supposed to do, but actually disenfranchising them further.

Women themselves fell prey to this hype because of the part of it that was true: They really could do all those things. But only, as McClelland pointed out, part-time. The nature of woman's life was for many years a part-time one, as she entered the world of work. The fallacy was to think that she could simply change from doing each thing part-time to doing it full-time and still keep doing it all, and still be in charge of the moral element of the culture, and still be the primary caregiver of humanity.

Researchers have noted for years that these conflicts have kept women from having aspirations as high as men. Other factors have contributed to women's lower aspirations, too. According to Sally Louise Dias (1975) at Boston University, lower aspiration levels among women result from their home-career conflict, their lack of planning for higher degrees, their lower concept of self-potency, and the lack of support from the establishment.

One quality that has long been touted as responsible for women's lower aspiration levels is their "fear of success." If women are afraid of success, it would follow that they are also afraid of the power that accompanies it to some degree, although power is not the only quality of success that they may be afraid of. According to M. Horner (1972), competence,

independence, competition and intellectual achievement are viewed as qualities basically inconsistent with femininity. The expectation that success in achievement-related situations would be followed by negative consequences aroused fear of success in otherwise achievement-motivated women and inhibited their performance.

In a study by Marie Groszko in 1974, it was not clear, however, whether it was success so much that women feared as it was competition. In this study, which used Thematic Apperception Test-like stories written by 121 college students, non-competitive and competitive conditions were created in a 10-week study.

For women as a group, the higher their nACH score [need for achievement, as measured by McClelland], the less well they did under competitive conditions. . . . High nACH women also did better when competing with men rather than [with] other women. The hypothesis that FS (fear of success) and the achievement context influence the achievement behavior of high nACH women was supported. The higher their FS score, the greater was their performance decrement in the competitive phase.  
(DAI 35B, pp. 2429-2430)

In a 1971 study by Vivian Jean Parker of 120 college women with an age range of approximately 40 years, 60 of whom exhibited high fear of success and 60 of whom exhibited low fear of success, an anagrams task was described as masculine to half the women and as feminine to the other half. The result:

Those high in fear of success imagery performed better when the task was described as feminine, while those low in fear of success imagery obtained higher scores when the task was described as masculine. In addition, high

fear of success women performed best when competing with other women, but low fear of success women performed best when competing against a man. Finally, there was some evidence that women worked best against women on feminine tasks and against men on masculine tasks. (DAI 32B, p. 5495).

It is obvious that not all women have high fear of success, so determinations regarding high fear of success women will not have an immediate and helpful connection to the current study. The women in this study have already achieved success, whether they have feared doing so or not. The low fear of success women, on the other hand, do offer some useful information.

Data from the rating scale items indicated that women high in fear of success imagery considered a home and family more important than did women low in this imagery. Low fear of success women considered personal professional careers more important than did the high fear of success women. Although both groups of women considered femininity equally important, the low fear of success women rated themselves more feminine than did the high fear of success women. (DAI 32B, p. 5495).

The resulting conclusion that low fear of success women saw themselves as feminine, and yet did better when the task was described as masculine and when competing with men, can offer conclusions regarding the need women have seen to function in a masculine world on masculine tasks in order to succeed. In the Groszko study mentioned above, high nACH women also did better when they were competing with men.

In a 1974 study by Laurie Judge Greenspan, women who had traditional sex role orientation as judged by the Gough Brief Femininity Scale had a higher motive to avoid success, as

judged by the Costello Achievement Motivation Scale, than did women with nontraditional sex role orientations, whether the tasks were defined as masculine or feminine. This finding may be important for this study, because all the women in this study can be judged to have nontraditional positions, whether they have traditional sex role orientations or not.

According to D. Tresemer of Harvard University (1974), people who avoid success that they perceive to be gender-role inconsistent may experience that as SUCCESS rather than failure. In other words, if femininity is a more highly valued criterion than achievement, a woman who successfully avoids a task she views as masculine may still experience feelings of success. This suggestion could have impact when analyzing the Groszko, Greenspan, and Parker studies. Whose definition of success were the women fearful of? Whose definition of achievement did they have a need for, or not have a need for? If Horner was right that competence, independence, competition and intellectual achievement are viewed as qualities basically inconsistent with femininity, would not a woman whose most highly valued criterion was femininity feel successful when she avoided them? Would it not be possible that such a woman could have a low fear of success and a very high need to achieve? Relevant to this study, wouldn't it be possible for that same woman to have a high need for power, but just to measure it in totally non-masculine ways? The dilemma of measuring women by men's terms creeps in again.

Language of Women

*As a poet, there is only one political duty, and that is to defend one's language from corruption. And that is particularly serious now. It's being so quickly corrupted. When it's corrupted, people lose faith in what they hear, and this leads to violence.*

--W. H. Auden

Demaris S. Wehr (1987) discusses the subtle interaction between androcentrism and language.

The use of male generic language perpetuates the habit of androcentrism. Once women are defined and treated as object and not subject, as not normative, and not fully adult, the definition itself alienates women from a sense of authenticity and subjecthood. Definitions and categories exert great suggestive power since they tell us what is in the nature of things. Unthinkingly and uncritically we accept them, at which point they begin to function as self-fulfilling prophecies. (pp. 16-17)

Thus, if the definition of women accepted by society does not include power as part of the definition, and women accept the definition as culturally given, this definition begins to function as a self-fulfilling prophecy, and women are not indeed powerful, because they have given up that potential as an option.

If women in particular, and society in general, looked at experience rather than at existing definitions, a new lens, or no lens, would be a possibility. What constitutes experience is tricky, however, since it also is formed by our social, cultural, and linguistic matrix. Further, Wehr notes that by challenging the standard linguistic conversational norms, women risk being excluded from the group and categorized as deviant.



The impact of an androcentric worldview has been well documented above. Gilligan (1982) says:

The disparity between women's experience and the representation of human development, noted throughout the psychological literature, has generally been seen to signify a problem in women's development. Instead, the failure of women to fit existing models of human growth may point to a problem in the representation, a limitation in the conception of human condition, an omission of certain truths about life. (p. 2)

One reason that the androcentric worldview perpetuates itself is that we are all accustomed, as Gilligan notes, to "seeing life through men's eyes" (p. 6). Further, we structure our representation of the life we see, through men's voice.

Women's subordination is structured through and by patriarchal language. Judy Pearson's Gender and Communication (1985) discusses the widely quoted Sapir-Wharf Hypothesis, the hypothesis that our perception of reality is dependent upon language, which is based on the notion that our perception of reality is determined by our thoughts and our thoughts are limited by our language (p. 68). Two areas of language concern connected to this hypothesis are the use of man-linked words (such as chairman), which are not viewed as referring as much to women as they are to men, therefore limiting options for women; and the generic pronouns he, his, him, and himself, which are not interpreted as including women as fully as men (pp. 72, 73).

According to Dale Spender (1980), language is MAN-made in that it reflects men's definitions of the world from their positions of power and dominance; for women these positions are false. These positions are false partly because few women hold positions of power and dominance, and partly because they are based on premises that do not conform with women's definitions. In other words, even when women come to hold these positions, the definitions many times still do not fit, because they are based on male standards and values, and female standards and values are not the same.

So the language that holds these positions in place is a male language. The tradition of interpretive inquiry, of which this study is a member, places great importance on meanings of words. Because language shapes our experience, according to Svi Shapiro of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, we are only free to have experiences that our language can describe. This makes an investigation into the words used by women to discuss their power very critical, since power has largely been a male concept and has largely been confined to males by the very limitations of the language. In other words, the fact that language is essentially man-made, in the words of Dale Spender, makes women's experience severely limited--limited in its external judgment of authenticity to male experiences. And because language not only shapes our experiences but also our evaluation of those experiences,

since the only words we can use to evaluate our experiences are the ones we have and regularly use, women are left to evaluate themselves negatively, since they can never measure up--can never BE men.\*

Women are researching their language use. According to John Pfeiffer (1985), "today in the United States, there are about 200 investigators of language and gender, and all but a dozen of them are women" (p. 11). The research into language is mushrooming, too. A 1983 bibliography of publications indicates about 800 titles concerning the role of gender in speech, compared with only about 150 titles in a 1975 bibliography (p.11).

Some of the areas of women's language use that have caused researchers to use the label "nonpowerful" are taglines (such as "Isn't it?" at the end of a sentence), qualifiers, and vulnerability to interruptions. In a study of conversations, Candace West and Don Zimmerman found that males accounted for 96% of the interruptions in male-female conversations recorded in public places. In same sex conversations interruptions were distributed equally. In other words, men tend to interrupt women and may interrupt other men with equal frequency, but the other men do not defer to their interruptions as women do. Women tend not to

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\*The history of women's rise in the professional world is rife with stories of their trying to "be" men, however, in such misguided attempts as that touted by John Malloy in his Women's Dress for Success Book, which encouraged women to adopt a modified male dress.

interrupt men, but they may interrupt other women. It is not possible to tell from this study whether women defer more to men than they do to women, or whether they defer equally to both (Pfeiffer, 1985, p. 9).\*

In another study, 76 taped attempts to start conversations, men tried 29 times and succeeded 28, whereas women tried 47 times and succeeded 17, another possible indication of women's conversational deference to men (Pfeiffer, p. 9). (These were men who professed sympathy to the women's movement.)

Research by Elizabeth Aries of Amherst College, however, indicates that women tend to defer to other women as well as to men. She discovered that leaders in all-female groups tend to assume a low profile and let others speak, while leaders among male groups tend to resist the contributions of others. (Pfeiffer, 1985).

In other words, the conversational and communicative style of women, which has been interpreted as nonpowerful, and as deferential to men, may be a difference in style and etiquette rather than a difference in their self-perceived power. Even powerful women deferred, let others speak, and did not interrupt. Unfortunately, however, as long as the

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\*The average movie-goer was educated to some of the intricacies of women's speech patterns in Dustin Hoffman's Tootsie. In fact, research conducted by Public Relations Consultant Pamela Fishman contributed to Hoffman's analysis of the part. Fishman's research indicated that women asked 70% of the questions. She cited one question, "D'ya know what?" as being used as a conversation opener very frequently.

evaluations are made by male norms, this will still be interpreted as non-powerful.

Analysis of women's language has been fraught with judgments and motive attributions. For example, research by Robin T. Lakoff (1977) has shown evaluations of speech, full of tag questions, tentative suggestions, and deferences to the listener, as non-responsible and powerless. These negative judgments compare women's language to a "standard" which is essentially male. (Curiously, when men use these same language attributes, Lakoff does not report the same negative judgments.)

This evaluation of these qualities of women's speech as powerless and non-responsible is a subtle form of sexism akin to the racism of the early international businesspeople who misinterpreted Oriental nonverbal signals as powerless because they included a lot of bowing and eye evasion. It was only after many unsuccessful attempts to establish trade that American businesspeople began to understand that the gestures of deference were not gestures of weakness. The Oriental customers were powerful on their own turf, however, and the misinterpretation of the signals did not do damage to them in the same way that the male establishment's misinterpretation of female language signals does, because females are not on their own turf in American professional society.

The extent to which women are operating on male turf is emphasized by the tag expression "for a woman," which even

women use. As Dale Spender points out, women, unlike men, define themselves as part of a category:

A difficult exam for a woman. . . .  
 It's not really a job for a woman. . . .  
 Good pay for a woman. . . .

Men, on the other hand, seldom or never qualify utterances by adding "for a man." They tend not to refer to their masculine status. One should not readily conclude that women are putting themselves down by making this utterance, either. Research has substantiated over and over that women tend to be more oriented toward their group memberships, their relationships, their connections with other humans. This speech pattern could reflect that. Once again, we would be wrong to measure women by the male norm of not referring to masculine status or qualifying their statements by their group connections.

Judy Pearson (1985) cites more than eight studies demonstrating that women's speech is viewed as unassertive and lacking in power, and that men's speech is viewed as aggressive\* (p. 177). Pearson notes that women tend to be more proper and polite in their speech, which is interpreted by Lakoff as an attempt to make up for social inferiority. Pearson maintains that the majority of these perceived differences do not exist in fact, although the tendency for males

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\*Ashley Montagu has noted that America is one of only a few countries where it is possible to pay someone a compliment by calling him (or her?) aggressive.

to be more aggressive and females to be more compliant is substantiated in a number of studies (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Further, women do tend to be more emotionally expressive than men, and more concerned with the other person's feelings.

Some types of language use by women which are perceived as unpowerful by men are their use of hedges (perhaps), qualifiers (to me), disclaimers (if you don't mind), and verbal fillers (you know), compound requests (if you don't mind, would you please come here?), and tag questions (isn't it?) (Pearson, 1985, p. 186; Pfeiffer, 1985).

Pearson summarizes her discussion of language use by women by noting how it demonstrates male dominance in our society.

Although men and women do not play static roles of the inferior and the superior, a great deal of verbalization fits the model of submission and dominance . . . . [The] language used by women and men demonstrates a superior-subordinate relationship between men and women. For example, Lakoff writes that 'women's language' stems from the idea that women are marginal to the serious concerns of life. She hypothesizes that sex variations in language patterns reflect and support the different and unequal roles of males and females in our culture. (p. 200)

Because women are noted to be compliant and conforming in many studies (Pearson, 1985), it is possible that their adherence to these linguistic norms reflects their following of social rules of communication and etiquette. It is also possible that their speech reflects the context they are in. In other words, our culture broadly defines women in a subordinate role, so their speech may reflect that context (Pearson, 1985).

According to Whitmont (1982), "Words, particularly those hallowed by age-old tradition . . . are pregnant with and generate meaning. Improperly applied they have the power to confuse" (p. 131). It would clearly be possible to interpret the female style of communication as non-powerful by the male norm, as it has been evaluated by many researchers such as Lakoff. What is NOT clear, however, is whether these communication patterns have any connection at all to the power of the speaker, or to the speaker's perception of her power.

#### Power

*Wherever I found the living, there I found the will to power.*

*Friedrich Nietzsche  
--from Thus Spake Zarathustra*

*To be alive is power,  
Existing in itself,  
Without further function,  
Omnipotence enough.*

*--Emily Dickenson*

#### *The Innocent Tool*

*A wise and kind woodchopper once went deep into the forest in the course of a day's work. His axe slipped, and he cut his leg deeply. He suffered much pain returning to the village but eventually recovered. While he was laid up, the townspeople, being simple folk, held a trial for the axe and found it guilty. They melted down the blade and split the handle into small pieces. Eventually, the metal was turned into bullets and the handle became matches. The woodchopper laughed when he heard about this, but he still had to buy a new axe. (Laborde, 1983, p. 199)*



*We cannot avoid  
Using power,  
Cannot escape the compulsion  
To afflict the world,  
So let us, cautious in diction  
And mighty in contradiction,  
Love powerfully.*

*--Martin Buber  
from "Power and Love"*

### The Meaning of Power

Power has been defined in many ways. Rollo May (1972) maintains that "Power is the birthright of every human being. It is the source of his [or her] conviction that he [or she] is interpersonally significant" (p. 243). The idea of power as something that is available to everyone is echoed by Laborde (1983) who discusses power as influence:

We all have the power to influence. Housewives, politicians, teachers, reporters, administrators, programmers, mothers, everyone. It is possible to have a limited amount of influence and be unaware of using [it]. . . . When you influence without awareness . . . , then you are influencing in the dark. Worse yet, you may not always be conscious of crossing from influencing to manipulating. (p. 198)

"As Dahl (1976, p. 26) reflected, one man's 'influence' is another man's 'power'" (Carlson, 1983, p. 9). Carlson also discussed power as influence, available to everyone, in a definition adapted from Bacharach and Lawler (1980):

Influence is the informal aspect of power, and it is not sanctioned by the organization. Influence does not necessarily entail a superior-subordinate relationship. If submission occurs, it is voluntary. Influence is uncircumscribed; it is unlimited and all social actors may gain access to it. (p. 12)

Using this definition, power as influence would be less organizational than personal, although it might be acted out within the organization.

The organization is generally the setting for studies about power, as it is in this study. Sagaria (1980), Kanter (1977, 1979), and others have maintained that the source of power is the formal organization, and that power differences are perceived as organizational, not personal. Within the organization, however, there are kinds of power such as influence that are available to everyone.

Another avenue through which power is available to everyone is through competent performance of their duties. The definitions used by researchers who modeled their research after Rosabeth M. Kanter have centered around the aspect of performance, although Kanter's additional assumption has always been that power is organizational, so she does not meticulously examine personal power as separate from organizational power. Napierkowski (1983) notes that "Kanter believes that the ability to perform activities competently is a neglected aspect of power" (p. 29). Kanter (1979) says "The true sign of power . . . is accomplishment--not fear, terror or tyranny" (p. 27). Power, for Kanter, is "mastery" and "autonomy" rather than domination and control (1977). Kanter's explanation of the relationship between power and effectiveness is that

Having power, being viewed as powerful, is associated with the ability to act flexibly and accomplish more. Those labeled powerful in organizations tend to get cooperation more easily, their needs are met, their suggestions are translated into action, and they can easily get the resources they need to work effectively in their own arenas. (1981, p. 560).

According to Carlson,

In Kanter's view, power dwells in the formal organization (the authority inherent in the official job description) and in the informal organization (the influence derived from the hidden political processes in the organization). She contends that individuals who have formal power (authority) without informal power (influence) are powerless. (p. 27)

These considerations, though they may be reflected in an organizational context, denote a personal quality to power. Rollo May (1972), however, maintained that power is always interpersonal. "If it is purely personal, we call it strength" (p. 35). Napierkowski found that "Interpersonal power was based upon knowledge of people, knowledge of organizational structure, and knowledge of their specialty area" (p. 212).

Drawing on the bases of power identified by Etzioni, as well as French and Raven, Bacharach and Lawler (1980) have identified four primary bases of interpersonal power: coercive, remunerative, normative, and knowledge.

The coercive base of power is the control of punishment; the remunerative base is the control of rewards; the normative base is the control of symbols; and the knowledge base is the control of information. (p. 34)

They outline four sources of power: (a) structure (the formal organization), (b) personality, (c) expertise, and (d) opportunity (the informal organizational position).

A fairly traditional definition of power was offered by Max Weber:

Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite the resistance, and regardless of the basis on which this probability rests. (Weber, 1947, p. 152)

The Oxford English Dictionary defines power in several ways that are significant to this study:

1. The ability to do or effect something or anything, or to act upon a person or thing. Here the citation is from John Locke: "Power . . . is twofold, viz. as able to make, or able to receive any change: The one may be called ACTIVE, and the other PASSIVE POWER.
2. Ability to act or affect something strongly; physical or mental strength; might; vigour, energy; force of character; telling force, effect.
3. Possession of control or command over others; dominion, rule; government, domination, sway, command; control, influence, authority. . . . Personal or social ascendancy, influence.
4. "In one's power" meaning "in one's ability." Also "of power" meaning "capable, competent." "To the extent of one's power" meaning "as far as one is able." (OED, Vol. 7, p. 1213)

There is popular theory that all power drives are really exaggerated attempts to overcompensate for feelings of

powerlessness or inferiority or that striving for power is neurotic (Horney, 1967), or that power is bad and should be avoided. In reality, power is not bad--it is like a chain saw, just a tool. It is neither good nor bad, and it can be either good or bad, depending on how it is used.

Rollo May (1972) speaks of an alternative to confronting one's powerlessness by converting it into a drive for power. This may be the way that many women have chosen.

There is one way . . . of confronting one's powerlessness by making it a seeming virtue. This is the conscious divesting on the part of an individual of his [or her] power; it is then a virtue not to have it. I call this innocence. The word is derived from the Latin in and nocens, literally, not harmful, to be free from guilt or sin, guileless, pure; and in actions it means "without evil influence or effect, or not arising from evil intention. (p. 48)

Casually, power has been variously defined as a vice or a virtue, as organizational or personal, as a necessary evil or as a useful tool, as spiritual or practical, and as male, female, or androgynous. It is as dangerous to deny power as it is to misuse it, particularly if one is in a position to exercise power. According to May, if we deny power, or ignore it, we set up a contradiction that leads us away from the responsibility that ought to accompany power. If we deny power, or ignore it, it is out of our control. If it is out of our control, it may be controlled by someone else who may misuse it. One in a position to exercise power, then, has a responsibility to control his or her power so that it will

not be misused by someone else. This premise is particularly important for women, since their arrival to the power arena is relatively new, and since the quality of power is one that has traditionally been associated with masculine qualities. The reaction of many women to their first experiences dealing with power and powerlessness has been to divest themselves of it, in order to avoid its perceived evil component. The conscious divesting of oneself of power in order to avoid the dangerous evil felt to be associated with it may not work, however: May talks about the danger of denying power with a kind of "pseudo-innocence."

Innocence as a shield from responsibility is also a shield from growth. It protects us from new awareness and from identifying with the sufferings of mankind as well as with the joys, both of which are shut off from the pseudo-innocent person. (p. 48)

Rollo May lists five levels of power, only the first of which has always been clearly available to females, and which become increasingly "male" as they progress to further levels:

1. power to be
2. self-affirmation
3. self-assertion
4. aggression
5. violence

This view of power is, of course, only one part of power, but it is perhaps one of the most commonly accepted views of

power. May's delineation of other kinds of power in his Power and Innocence was a non-mainstream, if not a new, view.

The first level, the power to be, is explained by May as "neither good nor evil; it is prior to [good and evil]. But it is not neutral. It must be lived out or neurosis, psychosis, or violence will result" (p. 40). He explains the power to be by comparing it to Paul Tillich's "power of being," Nietzsche's will to power, and Bergson's elan vital. He calls it an "expression of the life process" (p. 100). Inherent in the power to be, he says, is the "need to affirm one's own being" (p. 137). He gives as examples stories of infants, in whom the power to be is necessary in order for them to remain alive. This level of power, then, has clearly always been available to women. Certainly the idea that women have power is a non-mainstream idea, however. Men and women both have traditionally thought of men as more powerful than women. Maccoby and Jacklin cite more than seven specific studies in which men have rated themselves as more powerful (in various ways) than women have rated themselves. A more recent study by Hilary M. Lips (1985), which investigated women's and men's perceptions of power, showed that in 562 college students, both women and men, but especially men, were more likely to see men as powerful than women; and that men and women tended to hold similar general views of power. Because we live in a shared culture, this last finding is not surprising.

Although women may not traditionally have much power, women do have a drive for power. In a test of 124 working managers, using the TAT,\* women demonstrated higher need to achieve and need for power and not significantly different need for affiliation than men (Chusmir, 1985). In a 1978 study, women with high self-esteem showed high need for achievement and power in a study of 85 female business majors (Bedeian & Touliatos, 1978). According to Sagaria (1980), gender made no difference in predicting power drives.

May's male paradigm of power progressing to violence in its extreme or subverted form has been culturally and socially supported, too. Whereas frustrated and unhappy men have become violent, frustrated and unhappy women have traditionally turned inward into self-destructiveness and depression, and mental institutions have served a social control function for women comparable to that served by prisons for men (Cheslen, 1972). From the time of Freud, in fact, women have always been more "neurotic" than men, and many have noted that "hysteria" is a peculiarly female term, since its Greek root word means "womb." The majority of psychopaths, on the other hand, have always been men. This tendency of women to subvert their power into intrapersonal self-destructiveness, and of men to subvert theirs into interpersonal violence, is merely a negative parallel and result of some of the culturally supported stereotypes and beliefs about male and female qualities.

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\*Thematic Apperception Test.



The research into the areas of sex differences has been extensive, and many studies have concentrated on aspects that relate to power, such as locus of control, use of language, sex roles, fear of success, fear of failure, need for achievement; but as Deaux's 1985 review of the literature on sex and gender indicated, issues of power have maintained a remarkably low profile in most psychological accounts of sex and gender.

It is not the purpose of this study to compare men and women in relation to power, and yet since much of the literature that discusses women's views of power does so by comparing them with men's views, some comparative references will be necessary. McClelland notes in Power: The Inner Experience:

The male is pictured by sociologists as the aggressive, assertive protector of the family, the female as the resource, the person who produces children, food, and emotional support for the other members of the family. . . . Individuals high in power motivation tend to play out these roles more definitely. . . . He finds strength in action, she in being a strong resource. (p. 51)

Curiously, according to this clarification by McClelland, men and women could be playing out their power needs very differently. In fact, a woman enacting a very strongly typical female role could by this definition actually demonstrate a high need for power and a strong feeling of success at achieving that power. Their power needs would be very different from and virtually unrelated to their power style, or to the experience of power for them.

McClelland makes this same point earlier in The Drinking

Man:

If it is true that a personalized power drive can be satisfied in one of several alternative ways, it stands to reason that the correlation of the [power] score across individuals with any one of these outlets might be low. Some individuals with high [power] scores will not pick a particular outlet and therefore will get a zero score on it, just like the people with low [power] because they are finding their outlet in another channel.  
(p. 189)

In reference to this acknowledged possibility of channeling power in different ways, Winter notes that there are real differences in styles of exercising power, and that people with high needs for power may have very different styles of exercising it:

A person who feels that he controls his [or her] own fate may FEEL power (although internal control of reinforcement strongly suggests autonomy, while power seems more akin to 'control of the fate of others').

Both Machiavellianism and authoritarianism appear to be sentiments about the nature of power, or power as an aspect of man's nature, rather than dispositions to strive for power.

All of this suggests a particular style of exercising power [which] . . . is not the same thing as the power motive. (1973, p. 18)

So a person can channel power in a number of ways.

In an extreme example, it might be possible, in fact, for someone to have a fear of something and experience a feeling of power when they are able to avoid it. If a person had a fear of success, for example, and were able to avoid it, that might be experienced as power. In a less extreme vein, someone might experience autonomy as power, nurturing and

supporting others as power, making peace as power, even rearing children as power, to name a few.

The difference of action-oriented power for men versus inner-strength and resource-for-others power for women appears again and again not only in academic literature but also in the popular culture. Consider the doll that appeared on the scene in 1985, She-Ra. (Her other name when she's not in her power suit is Princess Adora.) According to Linda Sojacy, She-Ra was devised after researchers watched boys' and girls' play patterns and consulted with psychologists. Based on this input, the Mattel people found that the way to exemplify power for little boys is, no surprise, with physical stamina and strength and muscles. But for little girls, power means a lot of things that are not physical. It means also having "the power that's within to guide your own destiny. It's magical powers" (p. 160).

Evelyn Goodenough Pitcher, author of Boys and Girls at Play: The Development of Sex Roles, discusses further the difference between girls' needs for power toys and boys' needs for them. According to Pitcher, children see their mothers exercising emotional control. Girls imitate, but boys can't follow that model. Pitcher, professor emerita at Tufts University, sees the father as a much more mysterious figure and says the boy has to reject femininity and find himself elsewhere. Action toys provide that outlet. It's boys who buy most of these toys, because, according to Pitcher, girls

don't need them. "They don't have to take on power from the outside because they've inherited it." But, observes Pitcher, "the male has to find the power," or as Jock Ewing once told the grievously unaggressive Bobby, "Real power is not something you're given, it's something you have to take." It might be unnecessary to point out that the WOMEN of Dallas have a very different way of claiming their share (Sojacy, 1985, p. 160).

According to Winter, "The authoritarian believes that power is good and that inferior people should be deferent toward superiors, presumably as a resolution of his own intense ambivalence about authority" (p. 19). Comments such as that by Jock Ewing characterize a deep difference between the perceptions of men about power and the perceptions of women about power. There is a clear difference, not only in their perceptions of their own power, but also in their perceptions of what power IS, as the Mattel people were savvy enough to find out.

This clear difference in perception is one contributing factor to the misconception that power is a male quality. Even as late as 1973, researchers were likely to find statements such as the following made with impunity by the premier researchers in the field:

Thus we might conclude that leaders have power just because they have some special uncommon characteristic; that successful MEN [emphasis mine] of influence have a special kind of power "skill," just as scholars have

a special mental ability or athletes have physical prowess; and that history is the record of the actions of "Great Men" who influenced and led the people of their tribes, their faith, or their nation. (Winter, 1973, p. 11)

This view that power is something that only leaders have is again part of the dominant white male culture that is so deeply ingrained in our thinking that it is very difficult to shake it off. In our country, white males have been chiefly the only ones who have had any power, culturally, so it is almost a de facto conclusion to assume that they are somehow more powerful people. And the nature of power to these people who have been holding it has traditionally been measured in such standard scoring devices as that used on the Thematic Apperception Test by David McClelland--vigorous activity, hunt, and war--concerns that McClelland calls essentially "masculine striving" (McClelland, 1972, p. 84). These concerns might be irrelevant to women, and therefore might cause them to have a low power score on instruments where such masculine measurements were used.\*

Whitmont (1982) uses as a metaphor for the failure of masculine striving, the story of Wagner's The Ring.

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\*This brings up again the point that McClelland's scoring system, measuring "masculine striving" and "need for power" measures in a curious way the lack of power, the desire for power, rather than the feeling of having power, which is what this study is designed to characterize. As this researcher has noted earlier, there is a way in which having a high need for power suggests an absence rather than the presence of power. Those who really have a lot of it, in other words, might not be striving so hard to get it. This, of course, is through my own lens: a woman's view.

To me the whole theme of [Wagner's] The Ring pointed to the failure of power striving. This [failure] can only be resolved through unselfish dedication, the motive of Brunhilde's self-sacrifice to make Siegfried's birth possible. [I was struck by] . . . "the stupidity and destructiveness of the power urge, as demonstrated to me by The Ring. (p. xi)

Another key point made by McClelland in a later section of this same study is that the intense striving by men with high power scores does not usually reflect a concern for the good of others (helping behavior) but rather a concern for personal glory or influence, clearly contrary to the woman's perspective. "A man with a high power score tends to think of the world as made up of protagonists who are fighting active opponents for personal power, glory, or influence. They are not concerned to use their power for the good of others" (p. 186).

In 1975, however, McClelland noted something quite different in reference to the possibility of males exhibiting helping behavior.

There is another type of behavior which belongs . . . with power behavior, even though it is often thought of as not being power-related at all. It is a type of helping behavior that appears to be the direct opposite of trying to outwit or defeat another. If you help someone, it looks as if you are trying to save him, not put him down, as you would be trying to do if you were competing with him. . . . One way of looking at giving is to perceive that for help to be given, help must be received. And in accepting a gift, or help, the receiver can be perceived as acknowledging that he is weaker at least in this respect, than the person who is giving him help. (1975, p. 18)

This new perspective does not indicate that McClelland changed his mind, however. Note that in this remark McClelland

still sees the helper as being motivated by personal power. The point of helping the other person is clearly not to empower the other person, but rather to demonstrate that the other person is weaker. It is actually a manipulation that falls just slightly short of being duplicitous. The helper has the appearance of giving aid, but if the one being helped accepts it, he is acknowledging weakness and the helper becomes the winner in the power struggle. Later in the 1975 work, McClelland notes in one of his few comments about women that women with high power scores are "more willing to provide help to others" (p. 19). He does not draw the conclusion that they provide help in order to look more powerful themselves.

Interestingly, in one part of McClelland's 1972 study, it is clear that the programming of the participants (male) is such that nurturance is viewed as "non powerful."

Within the power treatment it was emphasized to blind-foldees that they would be very helpless or powerless while playing the game because they would be unable to do anything for themselves. The guides, on the other hand, were told they would be very powerful, because they would be in complete control of and have great influence over their partners. In the nurturance treatment blind-foldees were told that they would be secure and well taken care of since it would be the guides' job to assist them constantly; whereas it was emphasized to the guides that they would be alone and somewhat deprived because they would have to give a great deal to their blind-folded pairmates without getting anything in return. [Note that this implies that people who nurture get nothing in return.]

. . . . .  
Thus, in the power treatment, the experimental manipulations were intended to enhance a feeling of power among guides, and a feeling of powerlessness among blind-foldees. In the nurturance treatment, the manipulations were designed to make blindfoldees feel nurtured, and the guides feel deprived of nurturance. (pp. 199-200)

Women's views of nurturing as getting nothing in return may be quite different--in fact, women's views of nurturance may not include any feelings of powerlessness at all, and certainly women's views of nurturance may not include the curious manipulation referred to by McClelland in 1975. In many respects, women's views of power are quite different.

Rollo May (1972) talks about five kinds of power:

1. exploitative (like slavery--subjecting others who have no choice)
2. manipulative (power over another)
3. competitive (power against another)
4. nutrient (power for another, like teaching or caring for children)
5. integrative (power with another, like in cooperation or mutual support) (pp. 105-110).

In this discussion, May brings up an issue that is highly pertinent to this study, the relationship between power and love:

Some readers may wish to call nutrient power and integrative power actually forms of love. I agree with their meaning, but I think it best to guard against power and love being swallowed up in each other. . . . But we can say that the lower forms of power--exploitative, manipulative--have a very minimum of love in them, while the higher forms--nutrient, integrative--have more. In other words, the higher up the scale we go, the more love we find. (p. 118)

In this discussion, May clarifies some of the disturbing aspects of the five levels of power mentioned above, which



progressed to violence at their most extreme point. He labels force as the "lowest common denominator of power" (p. 100) and describes nonviolence (resulting from true innocence) as an authentic source of power (pp. 111, 112). He emphasizes the strong relationship between power and love, and proves it "by the fact that one must have power within oneself to be able to love in the first place" (p. 114).

If we are to 'honor reality', we must be aware that power and love can have a dialectical relationship, each feeding and nourishing the other. We must turn our attention to the interplay between love and power, and the fact that love needs power if it is to be more than sentimentality and that power needs love if it is not to glide into manipulation. Power without charity ends up in cruelty. . . . The constructive forms of power such as nutrient power and integrative power, come only when there has already been built up within the individual some self-esteem and self-affirmation. (p. 250)

Later in the same work, May indicated that real power is "a prerequisite for compassion" (p. 249), which is a form of love, as well as a prerequisite for communication, which is a way of forming relationships. These ideas of power and love being connected were non-mainstream ideas when May suggested them, but they more closely fit the female paradigm of power than do most of the previous models.

#### Women's Views of Power

According to Nuwanyakpa (1984), male and female senior administrators at selected public research universities hold similar perceptions of power. This conflicted with Sagaria's earlier (1980) conclusion in Pennsylvania that men and women

differed in their perceptions of power. Harlan and Weiss (1981) say women and men have similar needs for power, achievement, self-esteem, and motivation to manage (p. 99). Nuwan-yakpa also cites a 1980 study by Donnell and Hall which shows no significant difference in management style between men and women (p. 26).

Margaret S. Carlson's study of the perception of power of female administrators in higher education defined power as "the capacity to mobilize people and resources to get things done," which was Kanter's definition. She emphasized that she was stressing job effectiveness rather than domination and control. Her study examined the relationship of organizational factors to perceived power. She found that women were reluctant to play the games of organizational politics, spending more of their time in getting their jobs done (p. 187). Carlson's conclusion was that leadership roles in higher education were rooted in academic preparation and expertise rather than administrative skills and competencies (p. 152).

A 1983 study by Carol Maria Napierkowski at the University of Connecticut revealed that women managers perceived power (individual personal power) as the ability to develop relationships within organizations. Women tended to operationalize their relationships in terms of egalitarianism. Furthermore, Napierkowski clarified that interpersonal power

is based on knowledge--of people, organizational structure, and specialty area. Knowledge and relationships are two qualities that appear again and again in the literature about the nature of power to women. Napierkowski found that women view power in terms of interpersonal relationships. "Within these relationships, their behavior was characterized by mutual discussion, a concern for the feelings of others, and a wish by the women to appear rational" (p. 209).

It was found that women perceived interpersonal power in egalitarian terms. . . . They viewed power negatively when used for the purpose of domination and force, but viewed it positively when used in terms of executing their job functions. Moreover, they identified a personal component of power labeled variously as confidence or autonomy. . . . Furthermore, they perceived a relationship between their ability to influence and their behavior as managers. (Napierkowski, 1983, p. 210)

From the Introduction of "Generations: Women in the South" (Southern Exposure, Winter, 1977), comes a woman's definition of power:

Southern women have always combined the great human capacities of love and work. Today, many of us face the future with options our mothers never had: we can dream dreams that they could not name. But as we struggle for new definitions of love, for new choices in work, we remain rooted in a culture that they created and preserved. We seek a fusion of love and work which generates power not in the traditional sense of ascending over others, but power as energy that bears fruit.  
(p. 4.)

This definition captures several important components of a woman's definition of power: the connection with love, the complexity, the responsibility, the results, the hard work, the energy, the hopefulness in the future, the struggle for

survival. Many of these qualities would be foreign to a standard establishment-definition of power.

Of course using the word "power" as a surface explanation for everything about women in the end explains nothing. It might be possible that the female definition of power conforms more acceptably to the Judeo-Christian perspective. From this perspective, power would include an alliance with something transcendent, and could also include humility, and would be tempered with moderation and restraint, and could potentially even include sacrifice. Paradoxically, people seldom talk about power being a motive for their actions, in a manner similar to the way the Victorians never talked about sex--and yet it was always on their minds, and according to the literature and diaries of the time, motivated many of their actions. If power is as repressed today as sexuality was in the Victorian era, it may be strongly felt, and perhaps more strongly felt because it is not "allowed." It may be that it is not "allowed" because we have demonstrated that the unbounded lust for power may eventually create a tragic flaw that can corrupt and destroy. It may well be that a contribution from the female side could make power more acceptable, less extreme, and more accessible, therefore less frustrating than it currently is in the operating male establishment's norms.

A woman's view of power tends to be relatively wholistic. In an exhaustive study of women's experience of power in 1980,

J. Mayo-Chamberlain developed a "new theoretical view based primarily on Jung's theories of the psychology of women." She concluded that

women experience transformative power, the capacity to move toward their full potential, through the nurturing and imaginative action of their feminine principle, and the clarifying effect of their masculine principle. Women experience communicative power, the capacity to achieve consensus, through the relating and receptive action of their feminine principle and the discriminating action of their masculine principle. Women experience instrumental power, the capacity to gain prespecified goals through the adaptive and persistent action of their feminine principle, and the insightful action of their masculine principle. (DAI 41A, p. 4324)

This view, though it advocates a basically androgynous theory of power, offers some insight as to how males and females can benefit from the female perception of power's being understood. An androgynous view clearly offers more options than an androcentric view to both males and females, although it is not necessarily the view propounded by the writer of this research.

A woman's view of power may actually include aspects that are viewed as non-powerful by a man. According to Belenky and others (1986), "That they can strengthen themselves through the empowerment of others is essential wisdom often gathered by women" (p. 47).

Helen Luke (1980) notes another typically female power quality, the power of responding:

It is exceedingly hard for us to realize, in the climate of Western society, that the woman who quietly responds with intense interest and love to people, to

ideas, and to things, is as deeply and truly creative as one who always seeks to lead, to act, to achieve. The feminine qualities of receptivity, of nurturing in silence and secrecy are (whether in man or woman) as essential to creation as their masculine opposites and in no way inferior. (p. 11)

There is almost a transcendent or mystical quality felt to be associated with the power of women, as Whitmont, Sojacy, and others have noted. Gilligan (1982) talks about the power women have because of their place in man's life cycle:

The myth of Demeter and Persephone, which McClelland (1975--Power: The Inner Experience) cites as exemplifying the feminine attitude toward power, was associated with the Eleusinian Mysteries celebrated in Ancient Greece for over two thousand years. As told in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, the story of Persephone indicates the strengths of interdependence, building up resources and giving, that McClelland found in his research on power motivation to characterize the mature feminine style. . . . The Mysteries . . . were organized by and for women. . . . Thus McClelland regards the myth as 'a special presentation of feminine psychology' (p. 96). (p. 22)

Karen Horney (1967) speaks of African cultures where the power of woman is feared, her breath, her menstruation, her pregnancies, her childbirth, her touch, her voice.

Woman is a mysterious being who communicates with spirits and thus has magic powers that she can use to hurt the male. He must therefore protect himself against her powers by keeping her subjugated. (p. 113)

She cites dozens of examples of primitive beliefs and rituals and taboos designed to keep woman subjugated in various parts of the world, including the Western world.

At some level, women seem aware that they do have a well-spring of personal power. Whether they choose to use it or

not may relate to their fear of hurting other people, either through the nature of power itself or through the nature of the power they have. Belenky and others note that

Women worry that if they were to develop their own powers it would be at the expense of others. . . .

. . . The fear of diminishing others by acting on one's own behalf suggests a destructive power that cannot be tolerated by those whose emerging identities center on being nice, caring for others, and refraining from inflicting hurt. (p. 46)

As Jean Baker Miller (1976) has noted, women retain a fear that when they use their own power they will get a negative reaction from men, and this is so deeply ingrained that it is difficult to change. She adds:

There is another way in which power, as we have seen it work so far, has been distorted. It has operated without the special values women can bring to it. Indeed, these womanly qualities have seemed to have no bearing on the 'realities' of power in the world. I am not suggesting that women should soften or ameliorate power--but instead that, by their participation, women can strengthen its appropriate operation. Women can bring more power to power by using it when needed and not using it as a poor substitute for other things--like cooperation. (p. 118)

Miller discusses the experiences of women that have not led them to define power as "for oneself" or "over others." Women's experience, she maintains, does not require them to have power in order to maintain their self-image, and does not indicate a history of group membership that required subordinates. Therefore, "Women do not need to take on the destructive attributes which are not necessarily a part of effective power, but were merely a part of maintaining the

dominant/subordinate system" (p. 117). Because they start from a position of having been dominated, however, they bring their own special set of problems to the power arena. Further, it is not easy for men to accept the initial attempts of women to gain power.

Dominant groups tend to characterize even subordinates' initial small resistance to dominant control as demands for an excessive amount of power! (Miller, 1976, p. 117)

Rollo May (1972) noted this same consideration, pointing out that "There are few, if any, instances where a dominant group has given up its power willingly and freely; power has a way of burrowing in to stay" (p. 192). In fact, he suggested that in order to make a change, violence is necessary (!).

Power is not easy to "give up," and from the male perspective, since power is viewed from a principle of scarcity, if a new group attains some power it will only have done so by taking it away from them. From a female perspective of sharing, collaborating, and cooperating, however, this would not be so.\*

Miller notes that it is not, however, an appropriate female function to enter the power arena and "clean it up" as women have cleaned up in a service function for so many generations.

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\*Catherine Ponder's idea, popular in New Age consciousness literature, is the principle of plenty rather than the principle of scarcity, a distinctly feminine notion. She suggests that there is available as much power as one can open one's mind to receive. Note the power of receptivity inherent in this philosophy.



It is hardly a woman's task to go into the dominant culture to 'cleanse it' of its problems. . . . Instead we have to ask who really runs the world and who 'decides' the part of each sex that is suppressed. The notions of Jung and others deny the basic inequality and asymmetry that exists; they are also ahistorical. . . . Who has declared what is to be labeled masculine and feminine? (p. 80)

In fact, as Ashley Montagu has emphasized in The Natural Superiority of Women:

The traits that men have called 'feminine': gentleness, tenderness, lovingkindness, are not feminine traits but human traits, and they are the very traits that men need to adopt and develop if they are ever to be returned to a semblance of humanity. (p. 209)

We have to understand, in fact, that the gender roles of masculinity and femininity are purely arbitrary and society-based. "A biological male may by gender role be feminine, and a biological female may by gender role be masculine" (p.207).

The elements of the standard literature definitions of power that seem more appropriate for women are:

1. making or receiving changes (OED)
2. mental strength and force of character (OED)
3. influence (OED)
4. being a resource (McClelland)
5. autonomy (Winter)

Some elements that seem less appropriate for women are:

1. aggression and violence
2. physical strength
3. control and ascendancy over others

Personal Reflections

*It May Be*

*Maybe all that my verses have expressed  
is simply what was never allowed to be;  
only what was hidden and suppressed  
from woman to woman, from family to family.*

*They say that in my house tradition was  
the rule by which one did things properly;  
they say the women of my mother's house  
were always silent--yes, it well may be.*

*Sometimes my mother felt longings to be free,  
but then a bitter wave rose to her eyes  
and in the shadows she wept.  
And all this--caustic, betrayed, chastised--  
all this that in her soul she tightly kept,  
I think that, without knowing, I have set it free.*

*--Alfonsina Storni  
Argentina (1891-1938)*

*Translated from the Spanish by Mark I. Smith*

The value of education was impressed upon me at an early age by my mother, who also made me realize by her example how important it is to set goals and enroll others in the process of supporting you in reaching those goals. I learned at a young age to depend on my father and other male members of our family for emotional support. I was left on my own a lot as a child, and learned early to be extremely independent and autonomous. As I grew to adulthood, this independence manifested itself in my espousal of many "causes"--anti-war movements, anti-violence against women and children, literacy. In my recent years, I have embraced the New Age movement of self-awareness and heightened consciousness. This interest has motivated me into

a study of personal qualities such as power, and has heightened my interest in the women's movement.

### Female Role Models

My own perception of power has been developed through years of having no organizational or what is called by some theorists "legitimate power," but having still much of what I would call personal power. This personal power seems akin to strength, and strength seems to be a necessary but not sufficient component of the kind of individual power or personal power that exists in my own perception. Indeed, I would posit that for someone to have legitimate power and use it, the kind of personal power of this reflection would appear to be a significant, if not necessary background.

I learned first about this kind of personal strength that brings power with it from my mother and grandmother, both of whom had none of what the experts would call "legitimate" power, but both of whom had an enormous reservoir of survivalist-type strength--the strength that is able to accept whatever destiny hands one. This alone, however, does not constitute power. One must add to this several other important qualities: the ability to set and reach goals, and the ability to get others to support those goals.

Part of my beliefs about power were developed from stories that were passed down in my family, particularly stories about my grandmother. My grandmother raised her

children to adulthood during the difficult times of the depression, and her strengths and skills at survival were legendary, not only among the members of her family, but also among the neighbors. She exhibited remarkable strength and ingenuity in devising ways to survive without money or goods, and she had exceptional powers of being able to get others to align with her in her goals.

These qualities my grandmother possessed helped to form my beliefs about power. Another quality my grandmother was known for was love, and for a long time I believed that that quality was separate from her other attributes. It was only through the preliminary reflection that initiated this study that I began to see that her overwhelming capacity to love was intrinsically connected to her personal power. The family stories that are passed down about this woman are always connected in some way or another to her ability to get things done, her capacity to love, and her knowledge and creativity. In my mind, at least, power cannot exist without these attributes.

I remember one story about my grandmother's borrowing a dollar each from twenty different people so my mother could have her college jacket, a bold and resourceful idea. There is a clear connection between power and creativity--lateral thinking. When the traditional methods, the tried and true methods, failed, my grandmother did not give up. Similarly, she had learned to forage for mushrooms and wild plants to

feed her family in a time when groceries couldn't be purchased. She had, as most women in that day had, remarkable skills in sewing and needlework of all kinds. She could make the threads and yarns needed from the wool of the sheep in the backyard. She had a cow and made butter and cheese; she had chickens and was not squeamish about killing them for Sunday lunch; she knew how to do everything it took to survive in those days. She was a true pioneer.

But there was something more than simple survival here. My grandmother was also college-educated--a genteel, cultured woman. She was an extremely unusual woman in the rural North Carolina mountains at the turn of the century, for actually few women had any education at all. It was in the dichotomy of her strengths that I found her real power, for there was no foe that one side of her or the other could not conquer. If her indomitable pioneer spirit and creative know-how did not serve her sufficiently, she had all the graces of a properly finished Southern Lady to call upon, and it was the persuasiveness of those gracious influences that she used when she dressed up in her best clothes and went forth to borrow one dollar each from 20 different people to get my mother's college jacket.

Another quality of power represented by this story is its connection in my mind with love, for I am certain that my grandmother would not have gone to so much trouble just to satisfy a selfish personal desire. For one thing, with six

children to raise there was not much time for gratification of personal desires. Her eldest son, furthermore, was a diabetic, and there was precious little that could be done for diabetics at that time. Most of what could be done involved expensive insulin and complicated nutritional procedures, so most of my grandmother's energies had to be directed toward that goal.

My grandmother embodied many of the qualities I have found to be connected to power, and always as truly feminine ways. At the time she lived, of course, women had more constraints exercised against their use of power in any way, and all women who wanted to accomplish any goals of their own became adept at working within, not against, the system. There were, of course, some heroic women during her lifetime who challenged the system and won in one way or another, such as Susan B. Anthony, but the majority of such women were promptly put in their place by the male establishment, and, I might add, by the female co-dependents of that establishment.

My grandmother was no radical feminist, although within her own small sphere she accepted nothing less than equality for herself. She accepted the reality of the constraints that worked against her, and she accepted the reality of her role as a mountain woman in rural and small-town North Carolina in the first half of the 20th century. And within that acceptance, she found much power that she could use. For

most women at that time, power was confined to familial and social uses. Even Eleanor Roosevelt, one of America's first publicly powerful women, first discovered her power in familial and social circles. An ironic first use of power for many women is in support of their husbands, to assist THEM to power, and this was so for Eleanor Roosevelt.

This use of one's power in order to assist other people to power is an important quality of what I have come to call feminine power. It is my observation that there is a correlation between feminine power and the vital connectedness that women seek in their relationships with other people. I have observed and concluded that women seem more oriented toward empowering others through love as a gesture of their own power than they are toward controlling others through coercion as a gesture of their own power. These embryonic theories of power resulted as I reflected on my own perceptions of power, created by my observations of my personal role models.

One of the strongest sources of power, I am convinced, is simply operating out of a motive of integrity or "goodness." Just as all experiences and concepts have both a positive and a negative side, however, so does power. In fact, to the individuals who use power, one of the dangers is to fall into the use of what we might call the "dark side" of power. The dark side of power might include control or

manipulation of others rather than empowerment of others; it might include operating out of motives other than love; it might include the operation of power without the necessary accompanying social responsibility. The dark side of power represents power operating without the motives of integrity and "goodness."

My second role model was my mother, whom I remember more as someone I was subordinate to as a child, in the natural parent/child relationship that was standard in the childrearing practices of the 50's. My earliest childhood memories are of both positive and negative experiences of power in connection with my mother. Some of the experiences were of the frustration of having no power, and I remember this as being very real to me as a child. My mentally retarded younger sister was born when I was only 14 months old, and she required the majority of my mother's time from then on. The experience of being robbed of my mother's affections was very real to me. I have a still-vivid image of standing beside my mother's washing machine and pummeling her violently with all the pent-up frustration of a 3- or 4-year-old. It is important to remember that, as I now know, violence results from impotence, and my feelings of impotence were very real. My mother did nothing directly to empower me within the family that I remember. At the washing machine, she held out her hands to absorb the blows, but that is the only reaction I recall. Some of



the things that made me uncomfortable in living with my mother as a child ended up empowering me later as an adult by making me independent and creative. Whether she planned that or not, I do not know.

My mother had the same survival qualities my grandmother possessed, and that were so deeply imbedded in me that I took them for granted. One simply accepts the hand one is dealt by fate and creates an intelligent program to manage it. One example to illustrate this important part of my power perceptions is the history of my mother's career.

My sister was born severely and profoundly retarded, and from that moment on absorbed all my mother's attentions. My mother's reaction to this strange twist of fate has shaped my whole life. What my mother did at that point was dedicate the rest of her life to taking care of my sister. In meeting this goal she ceased the secretarial training she had been pursuing and enrolled in a university where she could get education in teaching the mentally retarded. Once she was trained sufficiently to perform her chosen career, she set about finding a way to do it. This was complicated by the fact that there was no class for the mentally retarded in the local school system at that time. She got a church sponsor and set up her own class. After she successfully recruited a class of students, she was eventually hired by the public schools, and hers was the first public school class for the trainable mentally handicapped in the western part of North Carolina.

The power exhibited by this move was extraordinary. First, the same lateral thinking used by my grandmother in persuading the Waynesville citizens to support her goals of getting my mother's jacket was there. Second, the same indomitable will: My mother WOULD have a class for the mentally retarded so that my sister could attend it. It did not matter that one did not already exist, or that she had no training in that area. She simply looked to see what was necessary and set about to do it. This apparent single-mindedness in goal-reaching is an important element of power. Third, she exhibited the necessary culture, education and persuasion to convince the establishment to go along with her personal goals. Fourth, she exhibited a power that resulted out of integrity and love: I suggest that my mother, like my grandmother, would not have attempted such an awe-inspiring task for purely personal and selfish reasons. Last, she exhibited remarkable power simply to survive the tricks and snares of fate--using whatever hand she was dealt to an advantage and to the good of all. This principle of working toward the "good" somehow is an intrinsic principle of feminine power, if not of feminine energy in general, and this instance from my mother's life is an example.

I remember my mother's educational goals as a major part of my childhood: spending summers at the university, driving her back and forth to various colleges for night classes during the winters, going to the drive-in movie in

other towns while she was at class, staying at the beauty parlor while she took classes. A woman had to be very creative in the 1950's to arrange child care for three children while she went to school, because there were no day care centers. This was a challenge that even my grandmother had not addressed, since she had gone to college before the children were born. It was truly a family commitment.

My grammar school years were filled with a succession of teachers whom I adopted as role models. All these were by my definition powerful women, and the ones who were not I immediately discounted. All these teachers who served as role models "adopted" me, and I really produced for them, although at that time in my life I produced for everybody: I thought I had no choice. My mother set very high standards, and I thought I had no choice but to reach them. One of these teachers became my third major female role model, and then mentor and close friend. It was through this relationship that I finally came to understand that I had power to change and influence even my role models and mentors, and it was through this relationship that I came to understand that the very qualities to which I had attributed power could also result in powerlessness if they were not used well. It was through this relationship that I came to understand how one can give one's power away, which is another aspect of the dark side of power. It is not enough just to survive. It is not enough just to be creative. It is not enough just

to love. It is not enough just to be cultured and well-educated. The power results from the combination.

My third role model was a survivor like the first two. She had the quality of setting goals and getting others to work with her toward her goals, but the difference in my relationship with her was that the goals she set that I was aware of were usually for me. Since my relationship with my friend started out as a student-teacher relationship, I became accustomed early in our acquaintance to accepting the goals she established for me, because she was not only an authority figure, but a beloved mentor and advisor for a school club. She served, in a way, as a substitute mother for many of us, and I was no exception. I fell easily into the habit of taking her advice about everything, and began to seek her advice about more and more aspects of my own decision-making, thinking somehow that the answers she gave were always correct and that I could always trust a decision I made when I had asked my friend's advice. What I did not see until much later was that I was giving up my power to her, rather than being empowered by her example.

I learned a lot about power from my friend as she later encountered hardships of her own, and even some failures, because I had never been particularly aware of my mother's and grandmother's failures. While I am confident now that

they surely had some frustrations, as a child I did not know it. My mother has now shared stories of some of my grandmother's frustrations, and I have come to realize some of my mother's failures, but as a child I was insulated from these experiences. The first time I realized in a meaningful way that powerful women could experience frustration and failure was when my friend and role model was denied teaching tenure, which forced her into a line of work that she was neither inclined toward nor prepared for emotionally and intellectually. The significant aspect of this experience that provided me with a new dimension of my power model was that she embraced this new career just as if she had chosen it as her first choice. But more significantly, she never once exhibited the attitude that she was unhappy with what she was doing, or that it was less than the career she had been denied. It was a year later, after she was able to secure another university position, that I realized how grateful she was to be back in the academic world.

A turning point in my own awareness of power in this experience was that I had in fact opened the door for her temporary employment when she was denied tenure. I learned from this and other similar experiences with this friend that power is reciprocal--that both parties in a relationship have power--that both can give help and advice, and that each can be mentor to the other. It was revelatory for me to help her: she empowered me by accepting my help.

I learned from this friend that I had power of my own that could be used effectively and positively with powerful people. I also began to learn the important lesson of not giving my power away to others. On the few occasions when my friend and role model gave me bad advice and I followed it blindly, the results were predictably negative. My friend empowered me in an ironic way by forcing me to leave the nest-- to look within myself for my own source of power, and to begin to experience using it. As this occurred, my friend began to come more and more to me to seek advice.

Many of these experiences were simply part of the maturation process. But I could have "matured" into a woman who still gave her power away, who still sought others to make her decisions, who still let others make her decisions for her, who reacted to the world with confusion and mistrust instead of with love and power; but I did not. I am confident that the powerful model provided me by these three women made the difference.

### Male Role Models

Just as my female role models when I was young provided a very powerful image for me, my male models provided their own kind of influence. Perhaps not so curiously, the male adult figures in my family were the ones to whom I looked for nurturance, not that I always found it there. My father and grandfather doted on me, and that was my substitute for

nurturance in my young years. I remember my grandmother's being pretty much of a taskmaster, as was my mother. They both had high standards for me to reach, but my grandfather and my father seemed content just to have me around: they were impressed by whatever I did.

I do not remember having any real male role models as a young child. I was always attracted to the men in my life, because they had greater power, even if they were sometimes lesser achievers, simply because of the time: they were male in a time when males were powerful and females were not. As most people in my time, I accepted that naturally and without question--it was simply how things were. My father made more money than my mother even though he had a ninth grade education and she had a master's degree--that was simply how things were. I remember my father's telling me to be a teacher, because it was a good job "to support a husband's salary." Because I always felt that I had to work twice as hard to prove that I was half as good, I became very goal-oriented. I became the classic achiever, determined always to prove herself. I had, in the terms of David McClelland, a high NEED for power. Unfortunately, the main reason I had a high NEED for power was that I had no power.

I remember feeling intense competition with my brother, and being painfully aware that even when his achievements

were lesser than mine he would get greater rewards, and that sometimes he would get rewarded for nothing in particular, just because he was a male. There were continually things that he could do that I could not do, even into adulthood. Sibling rivalry is normal, of course, and my brother and I were subject to maximum sibling rivalry since we were only 18 months apart. The intrinsic unfairness of his being allotted privileges that I was not given just because he was "a boy" made an indelible impression, and some of those privileges, such as having a car, were enormous. I love my brother deeply, of course, and he was one of the three most important men in my early life. I always assumed that he himself would not have treated me unfairly, but it was just the way things were. It was clear, however, that he did not mind being treated differently: I do not remember his ever offering to give up any of his privileges because of the inherent inequity of the situation.

#### Adult Experiences

I was empowered by the single years of my adulthood, during which I had no men on which to depend, not only for financial and mechanical assistance, but also for nurturance and succorance. As a single parent, I worked extra jobs, took free-lance positions, and started my own consulting and training business. My clients were always executives, and I felt powerful when I was able to get powerful executives



to change their behaviors in good ways, and to influence policy and procedure positively for the future of the companies and the employees. Most of my clients, though not all, were men, just because of the time. In the early 80's, women in the boardroom were still in a minority.

In 1982, I enrolled in Werner Erhard's est training, an experience that was to transform much of the philosophy I was developing about power. One of the main tenets of the est training that was important to me was the maxim "What you resist, you are stuck with." It seems to me now upon reflection that I was examining the quality I have now identified as the feminine quality of acceptance of circumstances, and the power that results therefrom is very real.

A second tenet of the est training was commitment. The struggle to come to terms with the commitments I felt I had violated in my own life, to accept the reality of those past experiences without denying and resisting them, was one of the most empowering processes I had experienced thus far in my life. Under the influence of the est training I accepted alleged wrongs that had been done to me and forgave the alleged perpetrators of those wrongs, an experience which liberated me from a deluge of negative programming and permitted me to allow self-growth, particularly in the area of relationships, and particularly in the relationships with my parents.

In my adult life, I have had many experiences that have both tested my power and formed my beliefs about my own power. From having a rapist break into my home, being threatened by termination in my employment, being a victim of domestic violence, being the victim of an attempted "date rape," suffering divorce and being a single parent--from all these I learned something that added to my power education.

When my house was broken into, I felt totally powerless and vulnerable. I marshalled my defenses--bought a dog, nailed my windows shut, and enrolled in karate. This seems in retrospect to be a very active response, and yet on the other hand it demonstrated that I had progressed from feeling scared and inept to accepting my position as a vulnerable human being and making an intelligent decision about what I could do. In terms of the quasi-Zen est maxim about resistance, I remember thinking at the time that I needed to accept the fact that I was a likely victim, a young woman living alone, and that I needed to do the things that one would do to deal with being in that category. This in no way implies that one accepts the invasion, accepts being victimized. It simply means that I accepted that the break-in had occurred, and that other invasions could occur, and that I embarked upon an intelligent response to these potential hazards.

The reason that it was so important for me to sign up for karate was that the entire mind process necessary for karate was contributory to the philosophies I was starting to develop about power. In the martial arts, there is a way of defense that involves accepting and using the power of the opponent to make him defeat himself. In this way, the martial arts fighter does not expend her energy resisting the attack of the adversary, but instead uses the power of the attacker against himself. In typical moves, the opponent may be thrown off balance or tripped. A karate student is also trained to control her own reaction so that it will not be out of control, and therefore available for the opponent to control. There is a curious yin-yang completeness in martial arts. There is a sense in which full harmony involves acceptance as well as response.

Another aspect of the karate frame of thinking that contributed to the conceptual framework of this study was the belief that a good karate student never attacks, but only defends. In that way, one only accepts what comes from the universe. One does not fight unless the universe sends fighting. My karate school was very strict about this belief. Our karate master was very traditional, and was very much into the mental as well as the physical aspects of karate.

One aspect of my power training that became solidified during this period of my life was the belief that it was acceptable behavior to defend oneself. Not only was it

acceptable, it was required. That did not mean that one had to respond to every blow or insult. Some blows and insults do not require defense--they are no threat. One would not always need to respond to the blows of one weaker, smaller, or less intelligent, for example, because such an opponent might not pose a threat. To defend would actually demonstrate cowardice rather than courage. One would thus indicate that they were too cowardly to just let the blow land and ignore it. All these things began to jell in my mind, and I began to see the real and varied nature of power.

The insights that I gained about power served me well in later crises in career and personal life. When a supervisor attempted to terminate me unfairly, for example, I accepted the reality of the situation. I knew if I resisted dealing with it that I would be stuck with it, carrying it like an albatross around my neck for the remainder of my professional life. Once I accepted the attack, the only next choice was to defend. The response to my defense was quick and decisive, in my favor. If I had resisted the situation I was presented with, professing that it was not real, that it was not dangerous, that it could not possibly be happening to me, I would probably have been fired or subtly pressured to resign. Because I accepted the situation fully, I was able not only to "win," but also to glean great learning about my own power from the situation.

## Conclusion

I have not led a protected life. I have been acutely aware in many of these and other adult experiences of my vulnerabilities. Each of the experiences I have discussed has not only added to my storehouse of knowledge about power, in as full and rich a way as has the literature discussed in the preceding sections, but also has empowered me personally. Thus I have included these experiences because they are part of my research and they form a large portion of my rationale for having chosen this subject to study.

In my own reflections about power, there were several important qualities that had significance to me as a researcher:

1. The connection of power with an intense commitment or goal
2. The connection of power with love
3. The necessity of action
4. The connection with adaptability
5. The ability to get others to align with one in meeting one's goals
6. The necessity of accepting one's circumstances
7. The connection of power with creativity or lateral thinking
8. The action of empowering other people
9. The necessity of operating out of integrity or "goodness"

10. The potential of abdicating one's power or giving it away to others
11. The determination to not define one's circumstances as defeat.

#### Conceptual Framework for Thematic Analysis

*. . . For everyone who does not know  
How to control his inmost self would feign control  
His neighbor's will according to his own conceit.  
--Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
from Faust, II*

This chapter considered the conceptual framework of the author, both the relevant literature and the personal reflections.

The printed literature was from four specific areas:

1. Cultural and societal views of men and women
2. Women's ways of perceiving experiences
3. Women's use of language
4. Power

The chapter concluded with a personal reflective search of background experiences that have contributed to the author's personal view of power.

The purpose of this chapter was to establish the nature of the researcher's lens and to provide insight into the worldview of women who were the subjects of the study.

Literature about cultural views of men and women shows that we have a culturally supported and largely unconsciously accepted philosophy of androcentrism in the Western world,

(Wehr, 1987). Androcentrism pervades our culture through the primary medium of the language. In that medium, androcentrism's subtle effects manifest themselves in every aspect of our daily lives, and the impact is quiet and enormous. Because of this influence, women hear messages routinely articulated informing them that they are not powerful. Women thus may accept the conclusion that they are weak and inferior powerless beings. They might challenge this message, but they are in a double bind: either they accept the message and admit they are weak, or they reject it and may be consequently rejected by society. Some women may in fact fear success because they fear the rejection they believe it will bring (Tibbetts, 1975, 1977).

There are many differences between the sexes, not the least obvious of which is their differences that relate to power: males are more assertive than females--stronger, more active, more violent.. Females tend to be more cooperative and interdependent. Women tend to be more tolerant of human differences and willing to consider problems in relationships, more moralistic, more interested in proper social behavior, more open, more interested in the complex and undefined. Women and men have significant differences in the area of moral choices. (McClelland, 1965).

The study of the psychological differences between men and women with the resulting conclusion that women are more

receptive dates at least back to Jung. Critics have criticized Jung and his followers as being androcentric (Whitmont, 1982). Jung has a lot of female followers, however, who find power in receptivity and believe it is a quality much needed in the world. Still, it would be less than accurate, if not facile, to evaluate women from a male model, yet it is done continually and unconsciously through such culturally penetrating media as the language we share daily (Spender, 1980).

Some of the culturally supported distinctions about women demonstrated in the literature (see Gilligan, 1982) are:

1. Women have an ethic of generosity and care.
2. Women define themselves in the context of their relationships.
3. Women's judgments rest on a premise of nonviolence--that no one should be hurt.
4. The moral ideal for women is service.
5. An element of power for women is self-sufficiency.
6. Women have been the bearers and carers of life--the keepers of the moral integrity of this culture.
7. Women may not define success, achievement, and power the same way men do.

Women leaders tend to prefer a people-oriented style, a style more oriented toward influence than control, a more "Theory Y" than "Theory X" style (McCorkle, 1974). An additional challenge to women in leadership positions is that their numbers are very small, and they consequently have few role models.



Because of the predominance of men in the world of power and leadership, and also because of women's natural tendency toward generosity and caring, women still tend to defer to men in leadership positions more often than not, which may inhibit their further advancement because deference is not part of the male power paradigm. Women in the power arena are still operating on male turf, where their own definitions many times do not fit.

The elements of the standard definitions of power that seem to fit women to various degrees are:

1. making or receiving any changes (OED)
2. mental strength and force of character (OED)
3. influence (OED)
4. being a resource (McClelland, 1965)
5. autonomy (Winter, 1973)

Both men and women, however, have traditionally thought of men as more powerful than women (Deaux, 1985)

Some elements of the standard definitions of power that do not seem to be as clearly operationalized in women's experience are:

1. aggression and violence (May, 1972)
2. physical strength (McClelland, 1965)
3. control over others (command) (OED)

From the researcher's personal reflections, the following elements emerged as significant:

1. the connection with an intense commitment or goal
2. the connection with love
3. the necessity of action
4. the connection with adaptability
5. the ability to get others to align with one in meeting one's goal
6. the necessity of accepting one's circumstances
7. the connection with creativity
8. the action of empowering others
9. the necessity of operating out of integrity or "goodness"
10. the danger of giving one's power away
11. the determination to not define one's circumstances as defeat.

The concepts and themes suggested from the literature that this research will investigate, in addition to its own naturally emerging themes, are:

1. the unique nature of power to a woman
2. the extent to which androcentrism pervades the responses
3. the extent to which the premises of generosity, care, and nonviolence emerge
4. the preferred style for women of exercising power.

## CHAPTER III

## METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Statement of the Problem

It is the purpose of this study to consider the human issue of power, its relationship to some women who have it, and their perceptions of what power is. An intention of the research was to study and understand the relationship between women and power as perceived by selected senior level female administrators in higher education. The problem was to determine the nature of the experience of power to these women, to analyze interpretively their conceptions of power and their perceptions of their own power, and to examine this information against a conceptual framework which included selected data gathered from a review of relevant current research and the researcher's own personal reflections. To determine fully and understand the nature and experience of power to these women, the qualitative method of interpretive inquiry was used. The study was bounded on all sides by the researcher's reflections and interpretations, the process of which is both a necessary quality of phenomenological research and an appropriate framework for a study by a woman about women.

### Selection of Methodology

According to Mitroff and Kilmann (1978), there are some theorists who contend that "science is in serious need of reform in its characteristic ways of knowing--its methodology--and in what it pretends to know about the world--its epistemology" (p. 3). These thinkers maintain that science itself is in need of reform and is particularly inapplicable to other realms of learning; as a method of inquiry science is both narrow and imperfect. To accommodate for these shortcomings, several "new" methods of inquiry have been developed, and some of these newer methods are particularly applicable to newer fields of study, such as the study of women and women's issues.

The quantitative tradition is founded on the assumption that there is an independently available social reality that can be factually described in its true state. This theoretical perspective holds a clear distinction between facts and values. The qualitative tradition, on the other hand, according to Smith and Heshusius (1986), "took the position that social reality was mind-dependent in the sense of mind-constructed" (p. 5). The accompanying belief was that truth could not be value-free, since reality is purely dependent on each individual's perception, and individuals cannot separate their perceptions and theirs. "Facts" cease to exist in the way the quantitative scientists had used the term, since they become inherently value-laden and subject to

interpretation. Particularly for vague and personal concepts such as power can we say that there are no "facts," existing separately from values, and that perhaps the values themselves are the "facts."

While it is still certainly appropriate to employ quantitative studies to gather data, it is clear that the technique of qualitative study also has appropriate applications. In many ways, since it has a powerful intuitive component itself, it seems to be metaphorically the feminine side of research--the "soft" side of a rich and full study. And it is clear that the research community has been enlarged by the addition of this technique. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), "qualitative researchers are concerned with what are called 'participant perspectives'" (p. 29). Most qualitative researchers go into their studies without rigid hypotheses. "The study itself structures the research, not preconceived ideas or any precise research design" (p. 55). This does not mean that qualitative researchers do not have a plan, but rather that their plan is flexible and that they let the data contribute to their plan. That is the very reason that it is so appropriate that the researcher's perceptions bound this study on all sides--because this study does not exist except dynamically, changing and being changed by all the women and all the literature that contributed to it.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), theories in qualitative research emerge "from the bottom up," as evidence is

collected and meaning starts to emerge. This is consistent with the qualitative researcher's greater emphasis on process rather than product (p. 29).

According to Shapiro (1983), qualitative research is characterized by

a rejection of quantification as a necessary ingredient of research, a more critical attitude towards the certainties or the adequacy of empirical evidence, recognition of the pervasiveness of subjectivity or consciousness in the accumulation of data, and attention to the existential moment and concreteness of experience . . . .  
(p. 127)

In fact, as Shapiro notes, because social reality is at best changing and uncertain, qualitative research makes no claim to apprehending an entire universe through the study of a limited sample. Qualitative research, in fact, seems singularly appropriate for research that challenges some of the "givenness of social roles" because it allows for the suspension of our established beliefs about the everyday world so that we may explore it. Since my study does, in fact, gently challenge some of the givens about both power and the social roles of women, the qualitative interview happily provides a correct method of inquiry into the experience of power to women who are in a position to have it and to use it.

Elliot Eisner (1981) identifies 10 dimensions in which qualitative (which he calls 'artistic') and scientific research differ.

1. Forms of Representation. Artistic research places a premium on the idiosyncratic use of form.

2. **Criteria for Appraisal.** In artistic research utility is determined not by validity, but by the extent to which it informs.
3. **Points of Focus.** Artistic research focuses on the experience of the individual.
4. **Nature of Generalization.** The artistically oriented researcher is interested in making the particular vivid as a way of making a contribution to the comprehension of the general.
5. **Role of Form.** In artistic approaches to research, standardization of form is counterproductive.
6. **Degree of License.** Artistic research allows wide liberties of portrayal.
7. **Interest in Prediction and Control.** Artistically oriented research does not aim to control or to produce formal predictive statements, but instead produces naturalistic generalizations.
8. **Sources of Data.** In artistic research, the major instrument is the investigator him- or herself.
9. **Basis of Knowing.** In artistic research, the role that emotion plays in knowing is central.
10. **Ultimate Aims.** Artistic approaches to research are less concerned with the discovery of truth than with the creation of meaning. (Eisner, 1981, pp. 5-9).

In qualitative research, key words are "understanding" and "meaning." Qualitative researchers are most interested in adding to the understanding of the human, a complex, value-laden, perception-oriented, dynamic set of processes. To complicate things, each individual has different thoughts, different values, different perceptions, different experiences, and different understandings of the world. And, as Alfred Korzybski was right to point out early in this century, all of these differences can change from day to day. The final conclusions stated at the end of this study will have had the potential and opportunity to change up to the time they are written. Within these natural limitations, the qualitative approach holds that attempts to understand and to make meaning add depth and richness to the research community, and offer possibilities for further study and research by future writers--perhaps even those who will use quantitative methods. In fact, good qualitative research enriches the quantitative community because it provides ideas for testing. The formulation of a conceptual framework is an important precursor to the verification and quantification of theory.

A widely used qualitative technique is the personal interview, and that is the technique that was employed in this study. The kind of personal interview chosen for this



study was the semi-structured, open-ended interview, guided by general topics and sets of questions, but with the content of the interview controlled by the respondent, within the limits of guidance by the interviewer. (See Appendix A for questions.)

According to Robert Burgess (1984), previous research scientists have put emphasis on the structured interview rather than the unstructured interview, in the context of survey research. In the structured interview, respondents answer a set list of questions, which are strictly controlled by the interviewer, and which were all formulated before the interview took place. It is critical in this technique that the questions be ANSWERED rather than discussed and considered. "In short, the interviewer is assumed to have power over the respondent who is given a subordinate role in this context" (p. 101). It is clear that in a study of women who have power, in an attempt to understand their experience of that power, this form of interview would be singularly inappropriate, because it would put them in a powerless situation in the interview itself, an experience which would rob them of the very quality being studied. Oakley (cited in Shapiro, 1988) has been very critical of the model of the structured interview, particularly for interviewing women. A more appropriate form for women, argues Oakley, is the conversation, because women tend to attempt to engage their interviewers

in conversation anyway. An unstructured interview has been referred to in social science research as a "conversation with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984, p. 102).

This type of purposeful conversation seems very appropriate for interviewing women. Oakley suggests that traditional interviewing practices such as the structured interview discussed above create real problems when the researcher's purpose is, as in this study, to validate the subjective experiences of women. Indeed, it was important in this study for women to have the freedom to change the wording of the questions, to offer additional insights that the questions did not address, and even to suggest that certain questions formulated ahead of time were irrelevant or non-contributory to the stated purpose of the interview as they understood it. And in fact, all of those possibilities did occur. A further possibility suggested by Oakley is that respondents will want to ask questions of the interviewer, and this possibility occurred as well. The interviewee must be prepared to deal with this in order to avoid loading future questions if the questions asked are related to the subject matter. Since I made every attempt to keep them in their power roles during the interview, the focus stayed on them.

Oakley (1988) suggests that the typical structured interview paradigm owes

a great deal more to a masculine social and sociological vantage point than to a feminine one. For example, the paradigm of the "proper" interview appeals to such

values as objectivity, detachment, hierarchy and 'science' as an important cultural activity which takes priority over people's more individualized concerns. Thus the errors of poor interviewing comprise subjectivity, involvement, the 'fiction' of equality and an undue concern with the ways in which people are not statistically comparable. (p. 38)

Oakley elaborates that this detachment, which is considered to be not only a necessity but an ideal of structured interviewing, can damage the quality of unstructured interviews. She emphasizes that the formation of a relationship between interviewee and interviewer is necessary to achieve the quality of information desired.

A feminist methodology of social science requires that this rationale of research be described and discussed not only in feminist research but in social science research in general. It requires, further, that the mythology of 'hygienic' research with its accompanying mystification of the researcher and the researched as objective instruments of data production be replaced by the recognition that personal involvement is more than dangerous bias--it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives. (p. 58)

As such a condition, personal involvement was essential to this study. The women selected as subjects not only had to admit the researcher into their lives, but they also needed to form a relationship for the purpose of the interview that would allow them to remain in their power roles, in order for the research to proceed to a successful level of understanding and meaning. If the interview itself placed them in a nonpowerful position as they discussed their own power, all the answers would be suspect.

## Procedures

### Selection of Subjects

The five women chosen to participate in this study are all unique individuals who perceive power in different ways and who have experienced it differently in their lives. It was the purpose of this study to understand these different perceptions, and to appreciate them in their uniqueness while analyzing and discovering common themes should they occur.

The women for this study all had top- or second-level positions in respected colleges or universities. The appointments were scheduled with their secretaries weeks or months in advance of the interviews. The interviews were held in the offices of these women, where they were in their natural state of comfort and power.

Sagovia (1980), Kanter (1977, 1979), and Carlson (1983) have found that the source of power is generally perceived to be the formal organization, and that power levels and differences are seen as organizational, not personal. The organization is one of the four sources of power identified by Etzioni (1961), French and Raven (1959), and Bacharach and Lawler (1980). It is for these reasons that the assumption is made that these women have power. The purpose of the study is not to verify that assumption, but to determine what the nature and experience of power is to these women who are in positions to have it and to use it.

### Data Collection and Treatment

The effectiveness of an interpretive inquiry depends upon the skill and expertise of the researcher. The interviewer must focus on adaptation and accommodation. He or she must have a research plan, but must review, recycle, and change as the emerging data requires. This study was approached without rigidly set hypotheses, but with guiding research questions (see Appendix A) and with a set of uniform guiding interview questions. These guiding interview questions fell into three categories: What it is like to be a woman, what it is like to be an administrator, and what it is like to use power. The researcher was responsible for ensuring that each one of these three interview areas was adequately addressed by the respondents. However, within those interview areas, much free discussion was permitted, and no rigid order of questioning was imposed. An attempt was made to keep the discussion of power to the last, and special note was taken if individuals mentioned or alluded to it in the earlier sections on their own. The conversations were very free-flowing and were limited only by the awkwardness of the recording equipment and the arbitrariness of the time constraints imposed by some of the respondent's schedules. The interviewees were free to expound on the subjects that interested them, and as long as they stayed within the broad areas of the study, they were permitted to

do so. The researcher let the meanings emerge and probed for understanding of the emerging meanings.

All interviews were in person, in the office of the respondent. An hour (minimum) was requested for each interview, and most respondents willingly gave more than the hour and offered additional follow-up time if needed. All interviewees were aware they were being tape recorded, and all interviewees knew that the purpose of the research was the preparation of a dissertation. All interviewees knew the number of other people to be interviewed and the organizational level the interviewees represented. Because of geographic proximity, it is possible that some of the interviewees may have known or guessed the identity of other respondents. These women were all fascinated by the topic, eager to talk about it, and very open and rich in their contributions. Because of the peculiarities of interviewing women addressed by Oakley, it is clear at the conclusion of the study that the naturalistic technique of a qualitative study was the only one that would have been appropriate to address my findings. Women tend to be very feedback-oriented in interviews, according to Oakley, and inclined to want to participate in the research process. There is a social quality to an interview with a woman, and the conversational process afforded by the phenomenological inquiry method allows for this social quality to be an advantage rather than a defect.

### Development of the Interview Environment

Power is not easy to discuss. Kanter has called power "America's last dirty word"; money, sex, and religion are probably easier to discuss. Thus, the researcher attempted to make the questions as low in threat-value as possible. No questions were asked that would imply a needed defense from the respondent as to the status of her power; all the questions were designed to carry the assumption that the interviewee had recognized power. The goal was to allow her to explore and discuss the nature and experience of that power.

The researcher conducted three pilot interviews, carefully noting any defensiveness resulting from the questions and making alterations and adjustments where useful to do so. Both the nature and the placement of questions in the interview guide were carefully considered. According to effective nonstructured interview technique, the questions were open-ended, and the definitions of key terms such as power and women were left to the interviewees. Bacharach and Lawler (1980) use the term "primitive term" to describe loose definitions that sensitize one to the issues involved. This concept serves three important functions:

- 1) reveals the complexity and multidimensionality of phenomena that might otherwise be treated in an oversimplified or unidimensional manner; 2) serves as an integrative device for analyzing seemingly disparate ideas; and 3) leads to more specific well-defined terms.
- (p. 14)

The subject of power was saved until the last half of the interview, after exploratory discussion of women and administration had occurred.

Murphy (1980) has described the interview as "a conversation with a purpose." The purpose of the interview was to understand the nature and experience of power to women who are in a position to have it and to use it. Within this purpose, the researcher's aim was discovery, and nothing was taken for granted. Likewise, since one of the goals of phenomenological inquiry is to allow meanings to emerge naturally during the course of the conversation, discussion of no relevant topic brought out by the subjects was discouraged or limited. The researcher adopted a neutral role during the information-gathering phase, simultaneously "believing everything and nothing" (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973, p. 69).

#### Analysis of Data

The first step in data analysis was to achieve a verbatim record of the interview session. The interview tapes were transcribed as soon as possible after each interview. Professional typists were hired for this laborious and time-consuming task, since the remainder of the interviews continued even as the previous transcriptions were taking place. Each interview yielded approximately sixty pages of text. The researcher checked, proofread, and coded the transcribed notes. To help ensure the accuracy of this process,



independent readers were also used for some checking, proof-reading, and "spot coding" of the transcribed tapes.

The transcribed interviews provided a wealth of qualitative data. Quotations that best illustrated the tendencies of each interview toward a specific topic were displayed in the research findings (see Chapter IV). When quotations represented an atypical response, this was also noted and displayed. The interviews were explicated according to the categories and questions developed in the conceptual framework (see Chapter II). The research conclusions flowed from these data, as well as from the review of relevant literature and the researcher's own reflections.

After the research conclusions were in draft form, one member of the dissertation committee and an independent reader examined the data and the logic that supported the conclusions. Murphy (1980) stresses the need for a "fresh eye of a neutral colleague":

An outsider can point out implausible data, holes in the argument, leaps to logic, and alternative interpretations. Often the most important points are buried in the report; a colleague can suggest ways that they can be highlighted. (pp. 71-72)

The insights and suggestions from these neutral colleagues provided opportunities for re-examination of the data and, in some cases, revision of the conclusions.

### Conclusion

While an interpretive inquiry might be "correct" or "appropriate," though, it is not without fault and limitations. Because we are limited by the same language used by the positivists, and the same language used by the culture whose preconceived notions we wish to suspend, we are in reality limited in our ability to approach the subject matter with an empty slate. As Valerie Suransky (1980) says, "Language is inseparably bound to consciousness" (p. 174). Within limits, we can only think the thoughts we have words for, and we can only have the experiences we have words to explain, and the words already have meaning attached to them by our culture, and we have been taught those meanings. This same idea was propounded by the General Semanticist Alfred Korzybsky and the linguist Edward Sapir, who claimed that reality is largely built up on the basis of our language, and that to imagine that we can participate in reality otherwise than through our language is an illusion. As Joseph Chilton put it in "Circles and Lines" from A Crack in the Cosmic Egg (cited in Shapiro, 1988): "Potential is always limited to the sum total of the images that can be conjured up by the mind, and this ties us down immediately to syntheses of things already realized" (p. 293).

Another danger in the qualitative research process is mentioned by Patti Lather (1986), who refers to this age as

the "postpositivist era" characterized by research whose attempt is emancipatory and whose process is characterized by reciprocity, negotiation, and empowerment. She refers to research on women as being one of several sources for this new age in research. She says that

Emancipatory knowledge increases awareness of the contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings, and in doing so it directs attention to the possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes. Admittedly this approach faces the danger of a rampant subjectivity where one finds only what one is predisposed to look for, an outcome that parallels the "pointless precision" of hyperobjectivity. (p. 259)

Therefore we can, as qualitative researchers admit, only make an attempt at understanding meaning by collecting a rich and full group of data, reporting them naturally, and subjecting them to scrutiny, knowing that the meaning we make may not be the same as the meaning another researcher would make, and knowing that we cannot claim to have reached the "truth," or to have made any basis for prediction of the future. Eisner's term "artistic research" may offer some insights into the value of the research. The subject matter chosen by artistic researchers may be universal and momentous, but the claims made at the conclusion are modest, in the same way that an artist may choose a subject for a poem or a canvas: It does not explain the nature of the universe, and there will still be unanswered questions, but it does permit a contribution to the understanding of the subject matter by the participant-reader, who is also approaching the work

with his or her own preconceived notions of the subject matter and limitations in regard to language.

No research technique is perfect, but some research techniques are more nearly perfectly suited to a specific research project than are other techniques. In this case, the methodology clearly appropriate for this study was qualitative research. This conclusion was reached after investigation of the possibility of several more or less positivistic techniques, all of which seemed to fall far short of accomplishing the purpose of this study, which was to investigate the nature and experience of power to women who are in a position to have it and to use it.

CHAPTER IV  
INTERVIEW: EXPLICATION OF CONTENT

Introduction

In the process of displaying and explicating the interview data, I have used two processes:

1. Background and Summaries. I have summarized briefly the content of each interview in reference to the three broad subject areas covered:

- a. what it is like to be a woman
- b. what it is like to be an administrator
- c. what the experience of power is like

In this section of the discussion, I have also described the setting of the interview and given brief background data about the interviewees that would be helpful in analyzing their comments.

2. Explication of Emerging Themes. I have searched the transcribed tapes to see what recurrent themes emerged in the discussions, whether or not I had specific questions related to those areas. Several themes that emerged repeatedly, including even the same words used from interview to interview, had not been addressed at all by specific questions from the researcher. It is just such a gold mine of rich and unexpected data that the technique of interpretive inquiry is designed to uncover.

Backgrounds and SummariesAdministrator A

Administrator A had been in her position as Vice-President of a medium-sized private college for 10 years, having first served as a faculty member for 8 years at the same school, during which time she completed her doctorate, and then was offered a promotion to Dean and later to Vice-President. Administrator A was one of only two interviewees who mentioned her husband. She began working after her children were grown and her husband's health failed and their roles "flip-flopped." During the interview, she had significant frustration dealing with the word "power," although it was clear that her influence in her institution was significant. She preferred words such as leadership, accomplishment, influence, and success. At the time of the interview, her institution had just completed a study of the Holocaust, and it was on her mind. She mentioned it twice, and it is possible that this recent emphasis colored her thoughts on power. Her feelings about power as she expressed them were largely "negative."

The interview took place in her office early in the morning, and she offered me a cup of coffee. We occupied two wing-backed chairs, with my tape recorder on a small Victorian lamp table between us.

In response to the questions designed to determine the interviewee's feelings about what it is like to be a woman,

Administrator A talked about how rewarding and fulfilling she felt it was to be a woman--to be able to reproduce and nurture the human race. She said that being a woman gave her a special opportunity to influence people, and throughout the interview she mentioned the places where she had this opportunity: her job, various community boards on which she served, her family. She talked about having been a traditional wife and mother for years, "a secondary role" within their family, before entering the academic arena as a faculty member. She expressed the belief that many roles were appropriate for women, depending on their circumstances, and explained as an example how she herself had responded to her circumstances by entering the working world. She noted at the end of the interview how important it had been for the women in her generation especially to not alienate powerful men in their organizational structure, because those men were in a position to stop the progress of the female newcomers.

In terms of her administrative role, Administrator A was keenly aware that her position in corporate development was a non-traditional one for a woman. She commented upon the extremely small number ( $\frac{1}{2}\%$ ) of women who held such positions when she started in 1979. She seemed pleased to note that now there were more than that.\* She was conscious of

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\*Although as a national average, the number is still only 1%, according to Sarantos.

being the only woman on the presidential cabinet at her institution, and noted that this gave her an opportunity to influence policy decisions at a meaningful level. She noted that she had "equal time and equal weight" and equal voice, so she was able to bring a "woman's perspective" to the decisions. She talked about the importance of having a "tiny influence" on each life that will have come through the college during her years as being very satisfying to her, and noted that although this was gratifying, it was also a tremendous responsibility. She spoke of her administrative style as "collaborative."

In response to the questions designed to elicit her feelings about the nature and experience of power, Administrator A spoke about her fear of and respect for power. She emphasized the great potential for abuse of power. She tried to use other words for power, such as authority and leadership; the term "power" seemed to be very uncomfortable for her. She explained that to her, power was "imposed" from the top, and that she preferred to think instead of motivating one's subordinates. She stressed repeatedly the negative connotations she felt the word "power" had for her, and some of those were control, arbitrariness, abuse, manipulation, autocracy, taking the easy way out, dictatorship, obsession, force, and loss of control. Some of the words she suggested as alternatives, and used as synonyms, were accomplishment, success,



influence, persuasion, achievement, being heard, personal reward, service, capabilities, credentials. In each case, however, when the "synonym" she had used was reflected back to her, it did not feel comfortable to her as a synonym for power. Because of her discomfort with the word, Administrator A expressed reluctance to see herself as a person with power, and noted frustration with most of the questions.

#### Administrator B

Administrator B began her work in academic administration after a "few broken romances" made her decide she was not going to be a "nobody." She made a decision to be a single career woman early in her life, and has been at the same institution for many years, although she did not say how many. She had made her rise to the second level of administration in her large historically male private institution by being offered promotions, like Administrator A, although her early career decisions do reflect personal ambition in that area. She remarked that she noticed that she had always been the "president" of everything she had been associated with. We conducted the interview in her large office in two side chairs with a medium-sized round table between us. She is a quiet lady who speaks thoughtfully and slowly, commanding much respect, and who seemed at least to have given the subject of power some thought.

There was a book on her shelf entitled something about women and power which I alluded to in the interview, and which she seemed to have forgotten about. There were many books in her office, and she seemed very well-read, mentioning literary references several times during the interview. She mentioned during the interview that she did not have her doctorate, correcting my form of address in a very comfortable way. She referred to herself as a "peacemaker," and alluded to her skills in conflict management several times. She was very interested in the subject of power, and seemed intellectually stimulated by the exchange of ideas.

In response to the group of questions concerning what it was like to be a woman, Administrator B talked about the many roles she thought were appropriate for a woman. She noted that she had given thought to these issues and had still not settled on a final answer, but that she was conscious of a certain sensitivity and nurturance that seemed to exist in women, whether it was genetic or socialized. She mentioned intuition as being particularly connected to being a woman. Administrator B noted several times that women get certain "tapes" in growing up that affect them all their lives. Her example was herself: she grew up with a strong paternal role, and developed the long-lasting impression that men are the major decision-makers and that women are involved to a lesser degree. She commented that women do think differently from men, and suggested that our "second place" position for so

long has influenced the way we think. She noted that women listen very carefully. She remarked about the women she called the "angry women," who have hurt the women's movement by not being careful and thoughtful enough in their input. She emphasized how important she felt it was to get along with the male administrators.

In the discussion about what it is like to be an administrator, Administrator B commented that she had always been an administrator, including in community groups and the corporate world before she entered academe. She observed that she loves figuring out what other administrators are all about, and that she sees herself as a peacemaker. She said that one of the joys of being an administrator was to develop other leaders and be a role model to younger women. She emphasized repeatedly the necessity of a female administrator's adhering to certain principles and values, and noted that it would be important to be strongly grounded in those values to weather the tough times such as the 60's.

She noted that she had been in many hierarchies where she was the only woman, and was appreciative that there were more women in higher education administration now so that some of the burden of speaking about all the women's issues was removed from her shoulders. As the only female senior administrator at her institution, she said she sometimes felt isolated, even though she also felt like a member of a

powerful team. She said it was very important for a woman in administration to have transferable skills.

In the discussion of her experience of power, Administrator B commented that it was scary, and should be used carefully for the common good. She also noted that having power keeps one on her toes and intellectually alert to gather information and listen well. She emphasized repeatedly the responsibility that accompanies power. She stated that she feels powerful when she is making planning decisions that affect the future of her institution, and mentioned particularly institutional decisions that will affect "generations yet to come." She commented again and again about being thoughtful and careful, and "not going where one is not invited," although she noted that she had been invited "enough for me." She defined power as "the ability to influence current or future situations" and mentioned decision-making as a major context in which she had power. She suggested that sometimes power is an illusion and indicated that she was interested in the research that's being done on power, because she feels it will open up discussions about the nature of power, which she would view as positive discussions. She mentioned that power can be either good or bad, and commented that from her values power should always be used to support principles of fairness. In her private life, Administrator B mentioned that an area of personal power was the control she had over her own financial security.

She said she did feel that there was a certain kind of "women's power" connected somehow to intuitiveness and perception that was intriguing to her, and that there is a contribution women make that men do not make (and in almost all cases she added "and vice versa"). She was very aware of the women who were on the forefront of the women's movement, had read many of their books, and thought their role was a valuable one, but she herself was more concerned about carving out an effectiveness within her own sphere, and she took pride in the important decisions she knew she had made for her school. She said it was important for women to guard carefully the power they were being granted now, and then we will have a "cleaner power," a more "trustworthy power," and we can "try to do it right," emphasizing again her strong commitment to the connection between power and values.

As a last comment, she noted that in her era it had been a choice one had to make of career or home, and she suggested that she might not have been able to do what she had done professionally if she had chosen to get married and have children. She said the top priority many women have "to be loved" causes a lot of women not to experience their power.

#### Administrator C

Administrator C is a businesslike quick-thinking and talking woman. Like Administrator A, she is a grandmother, and she mentioned her husband; she also has a son attending

school at the institution where she is an Assistant Vice-Chancellor, a large traditionally urban public university. She is a very task-oriented individual, and her office looked busy and full of work that was in progress. It was evident that a lot of the hands-on nuts-and-bolts work of her administration went on right in her office, unlike Administrators A and B, whose offices seemed quieter and more thoughtful. Unlike Administrators A and B, whose offices were lighted with incandescent lamps, Administrator C's office was lighted by fluorescent overhead fixtures, which added to the impression that this was definitely a place where work took place. Administrator C's comments were very task-oriented, yet she described herself as a "people person," and expressed that her greatest joy was to do training, particularly a commercial motivational program called "Adventures in Attitudes."

Our interview took place at a work table in her office, and we sat across from each other in the office, with the table between us. She was a very friendly person, and she seemed genuinely interested in helping me with my project. She seemed to have a passing interest in the ideas we discussed in a pragmatic way, but she did not express the deep intellectual involvement with the ideas expressed by Administrator B. Although, like Administrator A, she mentioned that this was not a subject to which she had given a lot of thought, she did not seem the least bit bothered by the discussion, and she did not have the frustration expressed by

Administrator A over the use of the term "power." She had a baccalaureate degree and had made all her career progress through being offered promotions. She had started out as a secretary and payroll clerk, and had been promoted to Personnel Manager, and then to Assistant Vice-Chancellor.

Administrator C, in response to the questions regarding what it is like to be a woman, maintained that many roles are appropriate. She did not believe that being a woman influenced her in her job other than to be a role model for other women. She was very aware that her job is non-traditional for a female. She talked about feeling very secure, having good family ties, and good home ties with her husband. She mentioned that, although this was not true for her, sometimes women have to be more qualified than men to get the same jobs. She noted as a minor point that powerful women tend to frequently deal with women's issues as a mission, and noted that women emulate women, "women don't emulate men."

In regard to what the experience of being an administrator is like, Administrator C noted that she had an advantage in that she "grew up in the system," having been promoted from secretary and payroll clerk. She also believed her experience in the personnel area had been an important advantage because it had exposed her to "more tests on development." She defined an administrator as someone who has an overall knowledge of the entire operation and who ensures that policies and procedures are followed. She said part

of an administrator's job was to get other people to do certain jobs and to have the authority to back that up. She mentioned that an administrator must be very "high on integrity," must be very supportive of university programs, and must develop staff and help others reach their goals. She commented that recognition of her subordinates is a very high priority for her, because "those are the people who get it done for you."

In response to the question regarding her experience of power, Administrator C said that power is something she has not sought and does not think about. Rather than seeking power, she said she seeks knowledge to ensure effective task performance. She noted that the feeling of power was for her the feeling of people having faith in her. She used the word influence as a synonym for power, and said "authority" is not a synonym, but it just happens to go with the territory.

She denied feeling powerful, but indicated feeling "good" in certain task achievement situations, and "proud" when recognition from top executives was given to her. She said that being in her position made her very aware of the image she presented--to represent the university well and not set the wrong example. She maintained that power is "the authority that has either been given to you or assigned to you to accomplish whatever it is you have to accomplish." She explained



that power is "influence when it's peers and up the ladder; authority when it's subordinates." She expressed a feeling of power in knowing that a phone call from her would get results. She maintained that power "ought to be used in a manner to make people feel good about themselves" and make sure goals are met.

She did not feel powerful. She said if she did feel powerful, she would be in complete control but she only has control of herself. Like Administrator A, she indicated some discomfort with the word "power." She said she wasn't afraid of the word, she just wasn't accustomed to it. She said that sometimes people are given power from above, which she called authority, but the people below them don't respect them, so in reality they have no power. She said that the nature of power is having the final say-so about things. She earmarked "integrity" as being a key element of power in her definition and said women become unpowerful when they try to make other people look bad. She noted another key element of her definition to be "responsibility." She noted finally that knowledge was significant because she felt powerless when she lacked knowledge.

#### Administrator D

Administrator D had held the position of Vice Chancellor at a large state-supported university for only a few years, and unlike the other four administrators, had not

come from the South. She had started out as a nursing administrator, and mentioned that her early beginning in nursing was because of advice from her family that she would need a career "in case her husband died or something." Like Administrator B, however, she had chosen career over family as a fairly conscious decision, although unlike Administrator B, Administrator D did not express that she intended to remain single. Since she is still young, the youngest of all the interviewees, it would seem to be a decision that still left itself to be made.

Since Administrator D held probably the most powerful of all the positions, I anticipated the most difficulty in getting an interview with her. On the contrary, she was very interested in helping me with my study, and scheduled an interview very quickly, considering the many conflicts on her schedule. She used every available moment of off-time in our interview (set-up of tape recorder, getting coffee and water) to conduct business that she had waiting for her. She was quick thinking and articulate, and it was clear that these were not new ideas for her to consider. She used vocabulary that indicated that she was familiar with the latest popular research, and she mentioned concepts from my literature review chapter as she spoke.

The interview was conducted in her office suite at a large work table, and we had to rearrange the work that was on the table in order to find room for the tape recorder.

She seemed to enjoy the subject of power, particularly as it related to a recent career decision she had made, and it is possible that this move, in which she emerged successfully with an image of a powerful person, influenced her thoughts on the subject of power. Like Administrator B, she seemed genuinely intellectually stimulated by the ideas we discussed. Unlike Administrator A, she did not seem to have any problem at all with the term "power." The interview went well over the hour scheduled. She was the only one of the interviewees who expressed concern about the confidentiality of her comments, and I was happy to reassure her that her name would not be attached to the discussion of her interview.

In response to the questions about the experience of being a woman, Administrator D responded that she was a person first, then a woman. She enjoys being a woman, saying that she enjoys the sensitivity and concern and caring associated with being a woman. She mentioned a sense of compassion and having a high need for being in touch with her values in relationship to any job she might take on and the need to see a service as being qualities she saw as particularly female. She also noted that her qualities of being a conceptualizer and enjoying putting together complex sets of circumstances or problems and making them interrelate to one another were

to her particularly female qualities. She noted that women have a need for relation, not only in personal relationships but also with ideas. She noted her high tolerance for ambiguity as being female. She emphasized that she is deliberately cautious about not interpreting her experiences as being caused by her sex, but she instead thinks of herself as a person; that gives her an advantage, she believes. She says all roles are appropriate for women except the obvious procreation role they don't take. As she made each of these distinctions about being a woman, she was quick to add that there are also men who are like this. She mentioned the necessity of having values resonate well for her, for example, and noted that there are also men who feel this way, but she felt that being a woman heightened her sensitivity to values. She suspected that her comfort with compassion and caring was instilled in her by her mother. She felt that her creativity and adaptability in conflict situations was a particularly female skill, as is her high tolerance for ambiguity, being able to change course and adapt to a situation.

She mentioned her traditional programming from her parents to have a career in case her husband died or something. As a "representative" for women in a world that is largely a man's world, Administrator D was very aware of trying to create a good impression for women in general. She did not

want to come across as a weakling. She seemed genuinely in touch with and comfortable with her feelings. She said that men find her non-threatening because of her warmth and caring--what she called her femininity.

She noted the importance of being a role model--to "give back" something of value.

As an administrator, Administrator D spoke of a recent career decision in which high priorities were non-violence, accomplishing something positive and socially valuable for the future of an institution and academics in general, and accepting no defeat. She noted the importance of an administrator's being adaptable. She is a strong supporter of the integrity issues. She spoke of the importance of being able to make a decision.

She mentioned the process of selecting key people as being one that gave her a feeling of power. She noted that she enjoys a collegial administrative style and wants input from her faculty, and enjoys dealing with people as equals.

In regard to her experience of power, Administrator D noted that the only reason she would take on a position of power would be if she had a higher level of influence in making something good come about. She talked about power as being seeing the outcome of her efforts, the "fruits of her own labor." She was keenly aware of the responsibility that accompanies power, interpreting it broadly so that she saw

a national responsibility for herself to support academic integrity issues as a role model.

She defined power as the opportunity to influence. "The person who has the power is able to facilitate or cause to occur certain things that are of . . . lasting value [so that] society . . . moves forward in a positive way because of something you have done." She noted that whenever she used power she had to be sure the greatest amount of positive benefit would result "for generations ahead." She maintained that power is something to be used, and used responsibly. She noted that power is available to everybody on a personal level, even to people who have no organizational power. She mentioned being very exasperated by power plays and other manipulative ploys. She said "personal power is making choices." She emphasized that there has to be a "goodness associated with it."

Part of Administrator D's power came, she felt, from a deeply held belief that everything "is going to come out okay."

#### Administrator E

Administrator E had been in her position as Vice-Chancellor of a large state-supported university for a short time, and had apparently not been promoted upward from within. She had completed her doctorate at another Southern institution in a different state, and had held other "management" positions before. Our first interview took place before the

institution opened in the morning, and she had to meet me outside the building and let me in with her key. We sat in two matching side chairs with a very small ashtray table between us, on which I placed my tape recorder. Other workers were arriving as we concluded our interview.

It was very clear that this interviewee wanted to help me out through a sense of camaraderie, and she expressed that she remembered going through the same process herself when she was writing her dissertation. It was also clear, however, that it would not be appropriate for me to interrupt her work day. She seemed extremely busy with several imminent deadlines. She was the only interviewee who asked for a copy of our taped interview, and I was happy to agree.

Unfortunately, the taping process failed during this interview. Administrator E was generous enough to grant me a second interview, which we held in a different location, a conference and work room where she was in the middle of a large and important project. She took a break from the project long enough for me to interview her, but she did not leave the room. This interview was briefer and lacked the spontaneity of our first conversation, and she seemed most inclined to just summarize what she remembered having said before rather than to develop and discuss her ideas. Like Administrator D, she used every available moment of "off time" during the interview to conduct business, and she was interrupted at least once by a staff member to handle business.

Like Administrators A and C, she mentioned being a grandmother. Because the subject of her own dissertation had apparently related to management, most of the comments of Administrator E referred to management. She mentioned several times that "a good manager is a good manager is a good manager--a good manager is transportable." All of the aspects of power that she mentioned were aspects of management. She seemed to draw a definite connection between power and management.

In response to the questions addressing the issues of what it is like to be a woman, Administrator E used the term "woman's touch." She said a woman's touch involves some creative and lateral thinking, and she particularly mentioned "risk taking" as being connected with being female. She indicated that there was no specific role a woman should adhere to, and that there were women who used an autocratic style, a democratic style, and a persuasive style. She noted that being a woman often required her to do extra work in order to establish her position in a predominantly male group.

In the second interview, she emphasized the experience of being human rather than a woman. She noted the domination of women in our society and remarked that there was a definite role in regard to children that women "have to play." She maintained that this was important and should be "guarded rather judiciously." Other than that, however, she said



there was no limitation on appropriate roles for women, and that women should not be classified "from outside."

She noted that the experience of being a woman has left her sometimes excluded from things she would like to be included in, particularly "talk around the table" if the group is largely male. She noted that in predominantly male groups she is frequently excluded from the eye contact. She mentioned particularly being excluded from sports discussions.

She noted the sparse numbers of women in the top positions in higher education administration and noted that women "have to strive." She called it a tragedy that "we have not given full consideration to how much talent we may be omitting for not having developed the talents of women." She seemed proud when I reported that her institution had the largest number of women in high levels in our geographic region, but remarked, "How good is it comparatively if the picture is so bleak totally?"

She noted that women bring a caring dimension to power, and suggested that women look more closely at people relationships than men do.

When asked about the experience of being an administrator, Administrator E emphasized the many and varied tasks an administrator must perform. She developed a central theme in regard to administrative duties: an administrator must motivate her subordinates to want (emphasis hers) to perform their tasks effectively. She stated many times that a "good

administrator (or manager) is a good administrator (or manager) is a good administrator (or manager)." She explained that this means a good manager is "transportable"--his or her skills can go anywhere--and that there is no difference in regard to sex about how effectiveness is judged.

She indicated in the second interview that an administrator has to be the leader, and should do such things as make decisions, develop team esprit and appropriate public relations, facilitate appropriate communications, and consider budgets. She suggested that the most important job of an administrator was planning for the future.

In response to the group of questions regarding the nature and experience of power, Administrator E developed the idea that power comes "up" (or is granted) from the subordinates. She maintained that there was a "flow" of power--up and down--and that it could be stopped in either direction, but that the "real" power resides at the top. She was emphatic that it is quite possible for individuals to give their power away, and added that it was important for women not to shirk their decision-making responsibilities by neglecting to make a decision that was theirs to make. She mentioned the connection between power and goal-setting, and brought up the issue of values again and again, noting that one must align oneself with goals that have integrity. She stated that women have much more power than they use.

She indicated that the aspects of her job that make her feel powerful are those that allow her to motivate her subordinates to want to accomplish her goals, and her organization's goals, to which she had a strong commitment. She emphasized repeatedly that for her the qualities that made men and women powerful were not different, but that sometimes women had to work harder to achieve the same goals. She maintained that an intense commitment is a necessary component of power.

In the second interview, she explained that the only way one individual can have power over another is if the one being overpowered gives her permission. She said the ultimate in power is getting people to want to do what you want them to do. She said there are several reasons you can have power--by virtue of your knowledge, the finances, your charm. She said a unique kind of power women have is by determining how their children think, and influencing their sense of values, which has an influence for generations to come. She indicated that there is something in women's nature that makes them less likely candidates for corporate power because "we look for in our leaders folk who are hard."

Each time she mentioned power she quickly included responsibility, and "the greater the power, the greater the responsibility." She noted that power was sometimes very lonely. She noted that it would be nice if there were a moral dimension to power--that powerful people should have good strong moral values--but she added that she didn't think that was so.

### Emerging Themes

#### Fear and Denial of Power

Several themes emerged from my discussions and interviews with the administrators in this study. One theme that emerged most strongly from Administrator A was the theme of fear of power. She stated:

Power is something to be feared. When it is misused, it can be lethal. It is also something very fragile and must be treated with great respect. Never abuse it. [What would happen if you did abuse power?] All the bad things I can think of. You immediately think of power, you go back to Nazism and what have you. It's an awesome responsibility to have power. Power to me has negative connotations. Oftentimes it has been abused through the years.

Administrator B echoed a similar sentiment in her answer to the question "What is power to you?" She explained:

"Well, it is scary to say in the first place. It seems to me that when one has power, one must be careful how one uses it."

This theme of fear of power is closely related to one expressed by Administrator C, which is a denial of her own power. In response to the prompt "Tell me a little bit about power. What is power to you?" she responded: "Power is something that we really don't think about, something that we are really not going after, nothing that I have ever sought."

Later on, in response to the prompt "Can you tell me some times when you feel powerful?" she denied power again, saying, "I never feel powerful. I feel real GOOD when I am called upon to lead something and take certain actions. . . ."

And again, in response to the probe, "What is it like for you as a powerful woman who is in the position to have power, what is it like to be powerful?" she emphasized, "That is something that I haven't thought about before. I have never thought of myself as being a powerful person." Later on, in response to the direct question "In your impression do you have a lot of power?" she concluded, "My personal impression is I don't have a lot of power. People tell me I have got power. I don't think so. I don't think I have power."

In a different sphere, I asked Administrator C to tell me about power outside of the academic position for her. "Just you as a person, when do you feel powerful?" She said, "Probably with my children, and I'm not really good with that. I guess too with my grandson. I have one 5-year-old grandson; I'm most powerful with him. My son is a junior here . . . so I'm not very powerful with him. I'm not a powerful person. No, I don't feel powerful any place." I pressed: "What would powerful feel like if you did feel powerful?" and at that point she defined power as "complete control . . . and I only have control of myself, so I can't have control of anyone else."

In a later question in regard to powerlessness, she responded that powerlessness would be "feelings of failure, if you are supposed to have the power. If you are not supposed to have the power, it's the feeling of being part of

the group that supports the people that have the power."

[It could be ok?] "Yes, it is fine to be powerless. You cannot always be in charge."

But in further discussions of powerlessness, it became clear that Administrator C did have some times that she clearly felt powerful. The differentiation was very clear because she was so clear about the times when she or someone else was powerless, that by default some times of clear power became obvious. I asked, "Can you give me an example of when it would be okay to be powerless?" She responded:

Any time you are not in charge of, you don't have the responsibility for, but your job is to support that person that has got the responsibility for, in any kind of way it is powerless. It is okay to be powerless when you are performing routine work or you are doing research or you assist someone. I'm one of those kinds of persons that go out and do things for people. You may say that I am going to have a workshop and I don't know where to get the name tags. I will say 'Give me the names and I will get them.' Now I may stay over here until 6:00 with that list. Now that is not power--that is assisting. I don't have the authority for whatever they may be doing. That is fine. I think a secretary working for you has no power, so it is okay for that person to be powerless. [Do you remember feeling powerless when you were a secretary? Was that an okay feeling?] Yes, as a payroll clerk, I was powerless, I just did what I was told.

Clearly, from this and other answers, there are times when Administrator C is in charge, and does have responsibility for things, and those times would be power situations, even though she does not often use or think of the term "power" in describing herself.

Administrators D and E were quite different from A, B, and C in that they had deliberately sought their administrative roles, whereas A, B, and C had all been promoted upward without actively pursuing the powerful roles they were later to assume. Both D and E had doctorates, and both had an extensive and intentional background in management. Administrator A had progressed from a faculty member to dean level to vice-president level after having spent 20 years in a traditional wife and mother role and then getting her doctorate in education during the period while she was a faculty member and then dean. All of this happened after her husband had an illness that forced her to assume the financial supporting role for the family, and after her children were basically grown and gone from the home. Her discomfort with power might result partly from the fact that she had not sought it, and perhaps even that she did not want it, particularly, but felt that perhaps she had little choice but to take it as it was offered. I definitely had the impression, when talking to Administrators A, B, and C, that they had not thought much about their own power prior to the interview. Administrators D and E, however, had clearly given power deliberate and intentional consideration.

After some discussion about the nature of power, Administrator D responded to the restatement, "Power, to you, is something to be used."

Yes, I say 'used' without any negative or positive valence. Power has to be used. Well, you can have power that sits there unused, I suppose, but if it's not used, it's not power. [What is it like to use power?] I think it's being conscious of the fact that you have it, and trying to be clear with yourself about the responsible use of it and how you are going to use it, and what the potential consequences of that are. I'll mention one of the frustrating aspects of having power by virtue of position. There's many times people will attribute power or influence that you don't intend to exercise or want. Power can also be perceived at any level. You can choose to be a powerful person or you can choose not to be.

This respondent, Administrator D, did not at any point indicate any fear or denial of her own power. Although Administrator E did follow the pattern of denying her own power, she, too, seemed to have a clear picture of what power was to her, and seemed comfortable with what she determined to be her appropriate use of it. In response to the question "When do you feel power?" she explained:

Again, that relates to my definition of what power really is, because I like to see the things that I am attempting to be very successful. When I see people work very hard to try to help me get to where we've defined, where we want to go, I feel powerful. I don't think I do a lot of displaying of how I feel except to be generous and say 'Thank you' and that kind of thing. I am going through something like that right now. We have a lot of balls in the air. We have a lot of folk out there trying to help us with some things that we're trying to do. If they all yield in the final analysis what we would like for them to yield, I am going to feel very happy and quite powerful over this one, yes."

Her brief denial of power came later, in the response to the question "What is it like to be powerful? What is the experience of being powerful?"



How would I know? I don't know. I don't know that most of the time that I walk around just feeling like I'm powerful. Okay? [Well, that may be what it's like.] To walk around knowing you're powerful? [No, to not walk around knowing you're powerful.] Oh, maybe because I guess if I had to. . . . You didn't ask me if I were powerful. You didn't ask me if I felt powerful, did you? [No, I didn't. Do you feel powerful?] I don't know whether it's power, but like I said I feel mighty MIGHTY good when something that I'm trying to do works well. I feel good when I see a lot of people working to try to accomplish a particular thing. And, I guess that must be a part of what power is like.

So after the momentary denial of power, Administrator E immediately came back to her definition and experience of power, with which she appeared very comfortable.

Administrator A expressed the largest degree of fear and denial of power. Administrator A stated:

I think if you go back to several authors that have written on power, I have not felt good about their writings because in most cases it was almost like they were obsessed with using power, and I think power, when you go to it from that angle, that you are using power to administer, then that is the wrong approach. I much prefer leadership over power. [What is the difference between leadership and power?] To me, leadership is getting people to do things through motivation, through their own self-fulfillment, through their own desire to perform, whereas power is imposed from the top, it seems to me, and they may perform at the level that you want them to perform, but it is against their wish, against their will, so to speak. . . .

In fact, it was clear to me in the interview that Administrator A did not have a problem with doing the things required of her in her powerful position. She performed activities that exhibited or manifested her power in a manner similar to Administrators D and E--it was just that she had a problem with the WORD "power." I pressed this point with her, to confirm my analysis. She responded:

I have a real trouble with power because of the negative connotations that I feel myself with power. Power to me just conjures up all these feelings of control and manipulation and that's my own personal problem. I'm sure to somebody else power means an entirely different thing. . . . I don't think of myself as being in a power position or as exerting power over my subordinates.

This struggle for the definition of power was the single most compelling quality of this first interview. Administrator A was not only reluctant to be happy with a view of herself as a powerful person, but she was also hesitant to determine a word that she would be satisfied with that would reflect these same qualities. Her frustration reflected some of the comments made by Dale Spender in the discussion of women's language (see Chapter II). The language that is MAN-made doesn't fit the positions of women, so for them those terms are neither true nor false; they simply don't fit. Administrator C captured this predicament when she said "I guess 'power' is a word I'm not afraid of; I'm just not accustomed to it." Once again, according to Svi Shapiro (1983), language shapes our experience. Because there is not a word within the MAN-made language to describe the experience of power for Administrator A, she was really somehow not free to have the experience. I sensed that the interview was very frustrating for her, in her struggle to answer questions that contained words that did not fit, and to discover new words that would fit.

In response to the prompt "Tell me about a time when you have felt really powerful," she answered:

I don't even know. I can't think of--I have felt times of exhilaration, but, see, I don't think of that as being POWER, and I have felt mountain-top experiences, but I haven't felt--they are not synonyms for power with me. [That exhilaration is not power?] No. Not power. Not my visceral feeling for power. It's hard for me to deal with power because I do feel negative about it. I've been fortunate in my work experience. I have never had to report to a person who administered by power, so I have never had to deal with it. I don't administer that way so it's hard for me, because I have always been more into a collaborative administrative style. And into my family experience, my marriage has not been one of power, so I just don't have a good feeling about it.

I expressed to her some of the feelings I had about the term "power," to try to elicit from her a term that would be acceptable to use. Again, she mentioned leadership.

I have read several things on power. When I have read those, it has always turned me completely off. In turn I go back to things on effective leadership. . . . [A strong leader has power in some way?] There are those kinds of power that may not be arbitrary. Maybe I'm considering leadership with that type of power.

Next, I asked her what kind of power would be appropriate for a woman, or what would be an appropriate way for power to be used by a woman.

Well, in a personnel decision. You have to use power if you want to call it power. A difficult personnel decision that I had to make recently: a very fine person--good, kind individual but no productivity--but to make that decision, is that power, or am I providing leadership for this program, by getting the best personnel on board. . . . Do you call that power because I had to fire him, or any of the number of terminations that I have had to make--is that power, or--

I asked her what feeling accompanied this. She said:

"Well, a sense of remorse. . . . I didn't feel any sense that

I had lorded it over him, power in that sense." I asked her if it would have been a powerful experience for her if he had succeeded rather than failed, but she was clear that that would have been success, not power.

You know, to me power and success are two different concepts. Naturally I did all those things trying to help to succeed, but we just couldn't do it. It turned out to be a psychological-emotional thing, a burn-out thing. He knew it, I knew it, and we came to a mutual agreement. . . . When you get to a point that you fire someone because you have power, that is sick. In my opinion that is a terrible abuse and misuse of power.

Her dissatisfaction with the term continued when I asked her what would be some appropriate uses of power. "If you use power positively to . . . influence people or institutions or what have you in a positive productive way, then that would . . . be appropriate to do that." But later, when I asked her if influencing businesses to make corporate gifts to the school, which was one place she had indicated that she would have an appropriate opportunity to use power, gave her a sense of power, she declined. "No, I don't have a sense of power." [What kind of feeling is that?] "That is a feeling of achievement and of success. . . . It's not power to me."

I pushed again for a synonym. "Let's say--just for the sake of toying with an idea, let's say--that it is not appropriate for a woman to have power." (She rather unexpectedly objected: "I won't buy that, but go ahead.") I continued. "Let's say for the sake of a question, what is appropriate for her to have that is LIKE power?"

Her real dilemma of feminism and moral responsibility left her at this point in almost a confusion of ideas:

I guess that I just don't agree that it's not right for a woman to have power. I think it is right--that it is one of the options that she needs to have. It's just in my being that it is not a part, using "power" in its truest sense of the word, but now I do think that other women can use power. They may abuse it, but they use it. I don't think you can close the door and say that women shouldn't have power.

The entire interview with Administrator A became a process of identifying something that she would consider to be powerful, and then having her deny that it was power. I asked her to tell about power outside of her academic position:

I have power on a number of boards, bank boards, this sort of thing; but there again it is not that I have any more power than the other ten people on the board. . . . I never had a feeling of my voice not being heard, and I'm sure that my voice is being heard. There, I have power. [Do you have a feeling of power when your voice is being heard?] I never think of it as that. It never occurs to me that it's power. [What kind of feeling is it?] It's a good feeling knowing that I am representing my ideas and concepts and getting them across and they are being heard. I don't think of it as being power, but more participatory community service. . . . [So now, when we first started our interview one point that you brought up was that sometimes through helping other people that way that gives you a sense of power. Does that happen to you in your community service, too?] It's more of a personal reward. Do you equate that with power? [Well, it might be.] . . . I would never even think of my services as power. It is a fulfillment of my right to live in this community and return to the community.

Administrator A's frustrations with the questions and with the concept of power came through again and again, on the answer to almost every question about power. Even when

I attempted to directly rephrase a statement she had made, or incorporate it into the next question, she would deny it on hearing it again.

For me, I have power and yet power is not a part of me, consciously a part of me; therefore, it is hard for me to articulate what the nature of power is. It's like you asking me what it is like to direct a great symphony, because that is not a part of me, and so it's hard for me to even think of what the nature of power is. [Is it a comfortable thing to have?] YOU'RE SAYING [emphasis hers] that I have power. . . .

In response to later queries about the ways a woman could experience power, Administrator A elaborated that there were thousands and thousands of ways a woman could experience power--personally, sexually, religiously. When she was asked for an example,

Goodness knows it's just so foreign to me to even talk about it. . . . I could go out and use physical power if I wanted to paddle my grandchild, but I would never do it. [If you did, would it give you a sense of power?] No, it wouldn't give me a sense of power. It would make me feel as if I had lost all my senses. There are other ways of handling it other than force.

I tried to capture the essence of her discomfort with power. "One thing that I am picking up on is that there is always a negative connotation connected with power. Would you say that is accurate?" (She agreed.) "Talk for one moment about how it is to be a woman with power and have the idea that there is a negative connotation to power. How do you play that out?"

I play it out by being in awe at the misuse of it, of superimposing it, of being autocratic and arbitrary and thinking that my way I stifle the way of any subordinate,

every staff member I have . . . if I had all the answers and all the power and I did not value the other individuals with whom I work and value their ideas . . . that to me is using power, . . . to me is a misuse of the position that you're in.

During our discussion of what would make her feel unpowerful, a final clarification of her negative feelings arose:

If power were the only thing that was involved, that would be so simple, because I mean it wouldn't take but one fell swoop. . . . [You think using your power sometimes would be taking the easy way out?] Yes, indeed I do, and the alternative would be more time-consuming and more difficult. . . . So often that would be the easy way out: Kill all the Jewish people, that was a way out for Hitler. . . . That is just a good example of an easy way out. Just gas them all. Misuse of power: that really lets me understand why it is so dangerous.

Although Administrator B too expressed early in the interview that power was a "scary" thing, her feelings in no way matched Administrator A's. In fact, she seemed at one level to be quite comfortable with power, and she seemed aware of the fact that she had power, but knew its limitations:

Sometimes I am not a very pushy person. I kind of go in only where I am invited. I don't find myself wishing that I was in the Board Room, but I have been invited enough for me. I am not really power hungry. I do a lot of things, but I don't need to be at every executive meeting, nor am I invited.

One important point made by Administrator B in regard to the danger of power is that it will really help to lessen the danger if we can open up discussion about what power is.

There is work being done on illusions of power. What I wish for is that we were open enough to talk about these illusions, because what you or I might see as

power might be described by others as control, and I think there is a great deal of danger in that. [Do you think control is always power, or do you think it is sometimes something else?] Control comes out of power, having a powerful stance. . . . We need more freedom to talk about power and control, so that the end point can be the best that we can make it.

Although she seemed comfortable with her power, she still denied it, and the tone seemed to be one of modesty rather than rejection. I asked her if she had a lot of power. "I personally don't think I do. Other people tell me that I do . . . but I never felt I was a person with a whole lot of power. I think about that a good bit."

In fact, Administrator B's denial of power seemed to modestly accentuate the amount of power that she had, and curiously, the longer I heard her mention that "I don't think about power much," I began to conclude that it was because she had quite a lot of power, and was quite content and comfortable with it. Administrators C and E had the same quality--all three of these women emphasized that they just tried to get the job done. They did not seem to fear the power associated with it, they just simply didn't think about it very much.

In conclusion, although Administrator A's interview in regard to fear or denial of power gave some important insights into the frustrations of the language we use to talk about these things, her denial of power seemed to have a personal and individual quality that she herself emphasized,



and that may not be consistent with the other four interviews. The other four interviewees did not deny power with the idea that they thought it was something to be feared or stayed away from; they denied it because it did not occupy their thoughts, and because it had not been a conscious goal. Administrator D did not even deny it, but was simply articulate about the fact that she had power and liked it: "I like being in a position of seeing the fruits of my own labor."

And, in an extended discussion of a difficult administrative action she had taken, she indicated some conscious thoughts about power:

So, when I assessed the situation as different, what I was doing was figuring out what power or influence can I carry out here that is positive and socially valuable. Even though, like in most things, it will have its down sides, because there's certain things, as much as I would like to do them, certain power and influence I would like to have, like being President of the University for the next five years and doing some things with the academic program, I can not do that.

Administrator D was also very clear about the parts of power that she did not like, the "power plays."

I don't find that part of my job fun at all. I don't find it fun just to go in there and power play with somebody else and show them that I can reassume the power. I'm just frustrated because I have to go out and spend the time negotiating with this person in order to change the atmosphere so I can . . . move forward.

All of Administrator D's negative comments about power were like this--things she didn't particularly like doing (she compared it to paperwork) but that had to be done, so she did them. This person was very comfortable with power, did not fear or deny it.

### Power as Influence

An important theme emerging from all the interviews was the theme of power as influence. This in fact seemed to be a key essential element in all the women's descriptions of power.

Administrator A said, "Certainly . . . I have the power here to influence policy, influence decisions, that sort of thing." She discussed her role on the President's Cabinet, the decision-making body of the college, made up of the three vice presidents:

It is a collaborative administrative style. [You're the only woman on that?] That's right, two men and me, and of course the president is a man.\* So I have influence on any major decision made at the institution, any policy decisions. I have equal time and equal weight, and my voice is heard. . . . It seems to be that I have certainly a major influence on the future . . . [of this school] by bringing my ideas, my thoughts, my background and my experiences to carry a third of the weight on any decision that's made here at this college--to shape the future of this institution and that is satisfying. It's tremendously satisfying to know that no major decision is made here without me.

And when asked what an appropriate use of power would be, she indicated that "If you use power positively to . . . influence people or institutions . . . in a positive productive way then that . . . would be appropriate to do that."

Influence was also an important subject in the second interview. When asked for a word that would be a close synonym for power, Administrator B immediately said "influence." Administrator B explained that power is "the ability

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\*Note "of course."

to . . . influence current or future situations. . . ." She spoke specifically of making building and landscaping decisions that would affect the campus for years to come, even for generations to come, as being a form of influence that she had that was powerful.

Administrator A, too, had spoken of the influence on the future:

I am influencing the lives of thousands of young people who attend [this school] . . . through the years. I mean if I stay here another ten years I will have been here for thirty years, and you think if we had that many students each year for thirty years, I have had some tiny influence on each life that has come through this institution. . . .

Administrator C also used "influence" as a synonym for power. When asked to describe power, she said, "It is not power from a standpoint of being powerful, but influence."

[Would influence be at least for you close to a synonym?]

"I would think so." She clarified that it is "influence when it's peers, and up the ladder; authority is when it's subordinates."

Administrator C, when asked to name some powerful women, mentioned Mary McCloud Bethune,

a black founder of a school down South, and she was an influence for black women because she founded the National Negro Women's Council. She was able to reach people, provide education for young black people that was not available. She had very good friends who were not minorities and helped her with the funds and resources that she was not able to get. She was able to influence those people enough to contribute to those causes. [For you, is there anything different about her power because she is a woman?] Her influence. Like she organized the National Negro Women. She saw there was a need. Men had organizations; they had groups and role models.

Administrator D spoke specifically of influence as being the only reason she would want a position of power. She was very clear that

the only reason [that she] would take on the position of influence or power [would be if she] believed that being in that position [she would] have a relatively higher level of influence in making something come about, or in helping something come about that [she thinks] is good.

Later, she explained again what the experience of power has been like for her, in the particular context of relating a story about her father that was very important in clarifying what power was to her.

I can see in my life in the last two or three years some real outcomes of my efforts, which is power. And influence: it wasn't just power and influence just for the fun of having the power and the influence. It wasn't just like playing a game for him. I know a lot of people who do take that attitude. They just like the manipulation of it and they like to feel powerful just to feel powerful.

She talked particularly about a career decision she had recently made that had the opportunity to influence not only the lives of probably all the students on a certain campus, but indeed the future policies and the administrative structure of a major institution. She explained:

I was trying to get on the campus behind the desk, because I wanted to establish myself . . . so I could start solving the problems. . . . It would be ridiculous to go in there . . . if there wasn't going to be any long term value to it. . . . Of course, it was going to have some potential impact on people's lives. . . .

In fact, the career decision she made was a significant one that will influence not only the specific academic

community she served, but the rights movement for a larger community, and she was acutely aware of that as she made her career decision. Her main concern, as she expressed it again and again, was the influence she would have on the larger community, including the academic community at large, and she was aware that the influence would be significant. She determined to make that decision out of a principled position whose values were fairness and progress.\*

She continued, again discussing influence:

If I decide some day I want to be a president because I have something really I want to do and that's the position in which I feel I can best do it, I'll do it. [You would have to resonate with all those other higher values?] Very much so. I'm very pleased to be at a point in my career where I feel that I could handle competently a presidency. The reason I am pleased with that--not because I want the status, although on a secondary level everybody likes to be complimented and so on--the reason for that is it opens up opportunities for me to have even greater influence than I've had before, on things that I care about; that's a privilege.

When I asked Administrator D directly what power is to her, she mentioned influence again.

Power is the opportunity to influence, the opportunity to make something happen, not necessarily single-handedly, because most positive things happen with a lot of people involved. Power to me is: the person who has that power is able to facilitate or cause to occur certain things that are of value, some lasting value. Society or civilization moves forward, not backwards, moves forward in a positive way, because of something you have done. . . .

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\*Protecting the confidentiality of my interviewee prevents me from quoting the extensive statements she made in regard to this decision.

Administrator E explained what power is to her as a process of influencing in order to get the job done:

I still feel that power truly is getting people to do what you want them to do. It is getting people to WANT [emphasis hers] to do what you want them to do. They get it done because you want it done whether they think it is the thing they wanted to do or not. They somehow have the feeling that it is, because I think that the only way that people can exert power over anyone else is that the person who is being overpowered gives their permission one way or the other. But not all power is a pleasant thing to have wielded on you, but if you can get people to WANT to do what you want them to do and they actually do it, I think that is the ultimate in what power really is.

So for all these women, influence seems to be an integral part of what they see as power, and particularly as what they see as appropriate uses of power. All of these women saw influence as an appropriate way to use power, and at least for Administrator A, it may come close to being the only clearly appropriate way for her to use power, in her own eyes. Administrator A also seemed to see influence as a clearly feminine part of power. She stated at the beginning of the interview, when I asked her to tell me about the experience of being a woman:

I think being a woman gives me the opportunity to influence lives in a special way that I might not be able to influence lives if I were not female, not a woman--the very fact that a woman has the capacity to reproduce, to nurture the human race, so to speak, through providing additional human beings in the race.

Almost paradoxically, it was clearly my impression that this interviewee would object to having this female kind of influence labeled as power.

### Power as Control

Another emerging theme from the interviews was the theme of power as control. Although this seemed to be the part of power with which most of the interviewees were most uncomfortable, particularly when it involved controlling other people, they still all acknowledged it as a part of power. Almost all the interviewees indicated that having some control over their own lives gave them a sense of power.

Although Administrator A didn't use the word control, most of her objections to the concept of power as she defined it centered around the controlling aspects of power. She indicated in many ways that she preferred a style of administration that was collaborative and cooperative--what she called "leadership" rather than power. The aspects of power that she was comfortable with were the parts that she called "accomplishment" and "success"; the parts of power in which she saw someone else "lording it over someone else" were the controlling aspects of power, which she labeled as a misuse.

Administrator B, when asked to define power, said:

. . . Good or bad, power can be almost controlling, [or] it can be releasing. . . . Power does mean you have control. [Control can come in many ways.] You know it's powerful to make no decisions. You just let things sit--you have made a default--you made a decision not to do something in a sense. Sometimes you control things by leaving them on your desk.

And later, Administrator B indicated that "Control comes out of power--having a powerful stance."

When I asked Administrator B when she felt power, she again mentioned control, but control over herself, not control over other people.

For instance, I feel very in control of my own personal security, financial security. I've never been one who leans on investment people very much. I ask questions, but I am pretty much in control of my living standard and personal and financial security. As far as in the work force, I feel I'm part of a team with power, but in very much isolated power though. I am the only woman administrator doing a whole lot of things that nobody else is doing. I always have been, here. Part of it has to do with this being a men's college for many years. . . . All the senior administrators here are still men.\*

Administrator C, while insisting that she did not feel powerful, said that if she did, it would feel like

complete control. It would feel like control, I guess, and I only have control of myself, so I can't have control of anyone else. [If you felt control, would that be a good feeling or not?] I don't know. . . . I guess it would have to do with the people surrounding you, how they feel about it, but I'm such a laid back person otherwise: work is not what you would call stressful. A friend of mine and I were talking this morning, she said, "Wait a minute, . . . [Administrator C], you don't know what stress is. You know you work like a crazy person, and you never get stressful." But you know I would not want any conditions to be so controlled by me that everybody felt uncomfortable. Right now, at home and at social settings, I'm like the life of the party. People like to talk to me and I have not figured that out yet. They will come to me with problems to get my opinion: What do I think about it. As a whole I don't control anything--I'm not powerful.

Another quality of power that is closely related to control in the minds of several of these interviewees is authority. Administrator C mentioned this. When asked about the source of power, she indicated that

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\*Note that even though she is one of the vice presidents she does not consider herself to be one of the senior administrators.



. . . the person in charge of it has to say that this person is in charge. That gives you the power, the authority to do it. Whether or not you can control those people that you must be able to control, I guess that is the earned power and maybe it has to do with respect.

Administrator D referred to her recent career decision when she discussed control. She was using a metaphor of choreography, a gentler word than control, and the control she took over the circumstances there assumed an aesthetic quality for her:

I feel like it's a creative act, like an artist almost, putting things together in a unique way and coming out with a solution to a problem, or going into a real difficult conflict situation and resolving the conflict--not only feeling good about reaching a pinnacle of success in resolving the conflict for the betterment of everybody, but I will also reflect upon how that happened and actually enjoy the aesthetic quality of how that came about. I find that about . . . [my recent decision] there was an aesthetic quality with what took place there . . . and part of the aesthetic, the choreography of it, I was doing. I mean I wasn't the only agent in the situation. There is a sense of power, in a lovely sense of the word, in being able to be a choreographer for a series of events.

She discussed her options to have been more controlling in this recent decision, and noted that perhaps a male norm would have been more controlling. She alluded to a conversation with her brother:

You know a lot of people in that same situation--he himself said, frankly a lot of men--would go into that situation [and say] "Damn, I'm going to be the president and I'm going to throw those kids in jail if necessary. . . . Never mind the consequences, I want to let them know I'm boss around here."

She did not opt for that approach. By deciding not to take control of the campus in a forceful way, however, as she

indicated in other comments, she may well have exerted a stronger and more lasting influence on the campus. Her principle, as she stated it, was to adapt to the existing circumstances.

Administrator D also spoke of her frustrations trying to get legitimate input from her faculty and staff when some of them assumed she was taking control:

I'm inviting conversation because I want to hear your reaction, your ideas. . . . That's a very genuine and honest request. Some people hear that for what it is, secure people, people who are trusting . . . and I have to experience those that don't--that they're always trying to think of the innuendos: what is she really trying to do, and they wouldn't be thinking of that if I didn't have power by position. Now unfortunately they are attributing power and intentional use of power to me, for better or worse, that I don't intend to exercise. Frankly, I resent that primarily because that puts a barrier in my opportunity to have a really candid, open, trusting collegial discussion with my friends out there. I consider the faculty my friends and colleagues. I find that very disappointing when that happens, because I'm being kept from having the kind of open discussion I thought we were all here to have.

Administrator E referred to what she called "management by intimidation," in a situation where the subordinates

can't do anything about it, and I guess that's the worst kind--the kind that the people who are being overpowered have no say. . . . I guess to the people who bear the brunt of it, it doesn't matter so much what you call it except that it is pretty unpleasant.

She mentioned that there were of course many ways that people could have power, and that control was only one of them. She said that control was a synonym for power.

And how one controls again, can be as diverse as . . . the ways people get power. It can be done, I think, very pleasantly for the most part, or it can be done very unpleasantly most of the time.

She mentioned Ronald Reagan as an example of someone who controlled very pleasantly. The quality that makes Ronald Reagan such a successful leader is that he never says anything bad to anyone, even when they have to be fired, according to Administrator E.

#### Women as Nurturing and Caregiving

A theme that was common in the literature was the theme of women as being nurturing and caregiving. This theme also emerged from the interviews, although Administrator A denied being a nurturing individual.

Administrator B mentioned caring and nurturing in her definition of a woman:

My experience would say, I think, women perhaps because of their nurturing instinct or role that has been put on them, it does seem to me though, that I know more sensitive and caregiving women than I do men. But again I would be quick to say that I'm not sure that socialization has been what's made the differences here. There's been a lot of difference in the last twenty years and we do as a society perhaps put certain roles on men and women. . . .

Administrators A and B both mentioned the necessary roles women have to care for their children, Administrator A in the context of having completed that obligation prior to entering the work force, and Administrator B in

the context of having given up that experience in order to be in the work force.

Administrator C also shared a story that indicated some real caring behavior on her part.

The one thing that excited me most, that was a funny kind of thing because I thought I was in the background. . . . General Adams . . . was here and she was a speaker. You know generals are big time, and she came to our campus and I was very much in the background. I was doing something for her and I remember going in and she was waiting to go on. People were coming in, including our Board of Trustees, and I could see that she was trying to read over her script. I did everything to make her comfortable. A week later I received a letter from her thanking me for everything I had done. . . . I could see she really needed some help and she was trying to study and everybody was trying to speak to her.

Also, Administrator C, in relating her administrative style, indicated some real caring for her work force. She is in charge of maintenance and facilities, and she is very aware that the members of her staff, janitors, grounds-people, and security staff, get little recognition. She was influential in getting an employee recognition award started, and in getting many of her staff recognized with this award, partly, as she noted, because nobody ever notices her staff until something goes wrong--the trash hasn't been emptied, the students are out of control, or the lawn hasn't been mowed. She said that she is very much in favor of appreciating people.

Administrator D talked the most about caring, particularly when I asked her what it was like to be a woman.

I feel a kind of sensitivity and concern and caring that I think goes with some of the attributes that [women have] . . . or choices that women make, and I find that that's important to me. On the other hand, as I say that, I don't want to suggest that men don't care and want things to be meaningful too, because a lot of men are very much that way and [there are] women who aren't particularly. But I do think that [there are] certain attributes that I identify with . . . being a woman: having a sense of compassion and having a real high need for being in touch with my values in relationship to any job that I may choose to take on. I feel a sense of concern about service . . . I need to see a service.

Administrator D referred to her mother as having instilled these values in her: "My mother instilled in me more of a sense of comfort with compassion, comfort with caring and comfort with the emotionality associated with all of that and enjoying it, enjoying those emotions. . . ."

She spoke several times about her concern in her recent career decision, in which she resigned from a very powerful position in order to have a more meaningful impact on the lives of the students involved. The value she supported was a caring value--she had to be sure no violence would occur.

Of course it was going to have some potential impact on people's lives, because people were getting very edgy out there. People were getting pushed around. I was going to end up precipitating violence if I went on campus. I had to be sure it wasn't going to precipitate violence. . . . There were some other people behind the scenes that didn't have anything to do with the University that were fueling this thing, that I would have been very happy to prosecute; but I was concerned with the students. . . . I didn't want to precipitate violence and I wasn't interested in doing anything heavy-handed with the students.

Administrator E referred to the caring and close role that women have with their children as being one that should be "guarded rather judiciously" when I asked her what an appropriate role would be for a woman, although fairly obviously from her own self as an example, she did not feel that a woman would need to give up her career in order to do that. When I asked her how a woman should use power she mentioned caring:

I do think that women bring a dimension to management in larger numbers than men do, which is to say that men bring a dimension, too, some of them, but I think women generally do bring it. That is a caring . . . whatever the situation is, and I think women do bring that. . . . [Do you think there is a relationship between caring and power?] I think if a person who has power also has caring they are a more powerful manager. It certainly feels better. I think many managers do not have the caring dimension to as great a degree as I myself would probably like to see it be.

### Integrity and "Goodness"

All the women in this study made a connection between power and values, an idea that power must be used for "the good."

Administrator A said power must be used in a positive, productive way, and she spoke of her presence on several community boards as "giving back" to the community, a necessary service. She spoke again and again of the necessity of not misusing power, of being in awe of it.

Administrator B spoke of the importance of not "compromis[ing] your principles on the way [to the top]." She said specifically about power:

It seems to me that when one has power, one must be careful how one uses it, and I hope that it is used for the common good and not for any one individual's promotion or what have you. I really do think that power must be used for the best causes, the common good--to use it appropriately so that the most benefit and resolve most problems. . . . I think you must be responsible; you must know you bear some responsibility.

Earlier, she noted:

I have enjoyed standing on certain principles that are just not to be changed. They might be interpreted variously by different groups, but it seems to me there are certain . . . rules of thumb and I stand by those. Other things I try to adjust as I go along. I think determining one's own value system, what one thinks, is important in the administrative role that you're carrying. Those have to be pretty clearly settled and then I think you can do pretty much what you want to do and feel okay if some of it doesn't work.

She mentioned that this discussion was very important, because discussing power would open up options to clarify issues, "so that the end point can be the best that we can make it." When I asked her what an appropriate way for power to be used on her job would be, she said:

I would say that certain principles of fairness must be the underpinnings. Being very clear on your decisions, doing it with integrity and selflessness, it seems to me, is the best way for power to be used. I would hope that someone with those kind of groundings would be the one that got into the position of power, but that is not always true. You have Adolph Hitler and the Mafia. I think you could use power in a very bad way, but in educational institutions, I would hope that integrity and fairness and all those things are givens.

When she was talking about women entering the power arena, she used the term "cleaner power" as something that women should aim for.

Because I think power is seen as positive for men, probably negative for women, we have to guard the power we have carefully and earn it, and thus maybe the power . . . will be cleaner power as we gain it for good reasons. [Would earlier statements about being grounded in the values, would that make power cleaner?] I think so. It's trustworthy power--it's predictable and trustworthy without personal gains--that you did it for the best of the causes, not for your self interest.

Administrator C, when talking about the role of an administrator, said:

I think administrators should conduct themselves in a manner that would be respected by others, be high on integrity, be very supportive of the university programs, and assist others in accomplishing their responsibilities, as well as ensure the development of staff so that there will be future administrators.

She discussed role models as she clarified the importance of integrity as it relates to power issues:

The good part about it is it can be a positive experience. That's good. If it is not a positive experience, it can do a lot of damage, because people in powerful positions, whether they are good role models or bad role models, . . . will influence and you will have a bunch of good eggs and bad eggs following behind. . . . You must become aware of it and make sure that you do leave positive and good impressions as opposed to negative ones.

For Administrator D, as for Administrator B, integrity and the "goodness" issues were very important.

Administrator D spoke the most about the importance of her values relating to the power that she used, mentioning a "real high need for being in touch with my values in relationship to any job" that she chooses to undertake. She emphasized the connection she must feel with the values of the organization.



I'm very sensitive to trying to be conscious of my values, and how my values connect with what it is I'm doing. I mean, there are certain places I could not work, and certain things I could not do, certain organizations I could not be a part of, because in spite of certain superficial values that might be associated with that, on a deeper level I would not want that association because I feel that my values are not in concert with the values of the organization. . . . I do feel that I must know something about the internal values of the organization. I have to talk with people to find out what kind of contribution is this institution trying to make . . . who is it trying to serve, what value that I believe it has in society.

Administrator D's concern about the values was specifically so that they would not be in conflict with her own internal values, creating an internal conflict of commitments, but also and more importantly because of the impact that the institution was capable of making on the future. For Administrator D, the only reason she would accept a position of power would be if it offered the chance to have a positive impact on future events.

She discussed other issues of lesser importance to her, such as status and salary, and feedback from others about her performance,

but that isn't what drives me. What drives me is a sense of we're here for a short time here on this earth, and it's a fun place to be, and there are a lot of good things to enjoy about it, but . . . nothing stands still. The quality of life for me individually as well as those that follow me is going to have a lot to do with what contribution I make. I believe that, I need to feel that, and so when I make choices, I make choices with that in mind. . . . The only reason why I would take on a position of influence or power is if I believed that being in that position I will have a relatively higher level of influence in making something come about, or in helping something come about that I think is good. . . . That's why the values have to resonate well for me.

In her career decision the primary ethic she espoused was that she was not going to precipitate violence or to allow violence to be precipitated by others. This echoes Carol Gilligan's statement that the predominant male ethic is fairness and justice, while the predominant female ethic is mercy and nonviolence. Her decision in this case was strongly grounded in mercy and nonviolence, although she was openly and verbally concerned about the long-term value to any decision she might make.

It would be ridiculous to go in there and just show off that I could get on campus if there wasn't going to be any long term value to it. Then of course it was going to have some potential impact on people's lives, because people were getting very edgy out there. People were getting pushed around. I wasn't going to end up precipitating violence if I went on campus. I had to be sure it wasn't going to precipitate violence. No, I was not going to prosecute them. Certainly they were not doing things that were very nice. I'm not condoning the behavior. . . . I was trying to get on and off campus every day. I didn't want to precipitate violence, and I wasn't interested in doing anything heavy-handed with the students.

She mentioned again and again that her concern had been to do something that was positive and socially valuable, but she was also concerned with what she called the integrity issues that were larger than the university, the academic integrity issues that would affect the entire academic community, which she was impelled to support as a leader in higher education. She was deeply cognizant of the fact that she had a historical responsibility that she desired to uphold. She mentioned lasting values again later when she defined power.

Power to me is: the person who has that power is able to facilitate or cause to occur certain things that are of value, some lasting value. Society or civilization moves forward not backwards, moves forward in a positive way, because of something you have done.

She framed this in reference to her own actions in her recent administrative action.

I wanted to be sure with whatever power I was exercising at that time, the greatest amount of positive benefit would come about as a result of what was happening there, and that some of the continuing values and aims, some of the principles, the positive ideals associated with that would continue to perpetuate in the . . . community for generations ahead, because of the way it's recorded in the history books.

As she got more specifically into the subject of personal power, she emphasized the same points of values and goodness.

Personal power to me is the recognition and the willingness to utilize for whatever benefits that one values, one's capacity. . . . Personal power is making choices, making choices in a realistic boundary. It's not making just any old choices--making choices derived from as accurate an understanding as a person can have . . . trying to have a reasonably accurate picture of what it is your capabilities are, because not everybody is capable of the same things. So you don't want to step out and try to exercise personal power in a way that you're going to fail, because you don't really have the attributes that are requisite to carrying that off very well. So you want to know what attributes and instruments of power that I have that I can use positively. [And that's probably part of personal power, self-assessment?] That's right, and of course the choice to use it and to use it for aims that you feel are of value. There has to be goodness associated with it, so there's a philosophical connection for me. It isn't just doing it to do it.

Administrator E used the term "responsibility" more than any other term when talking about the higher dimension of power. She said, "I think power and responsibility

definitely go together." When I asked her to elaborate on a comment she made in regard to power and caring, she explained:

I really quite easily feel that there should be [a connection], that it's better when there is [caring]. You know morals are so differently defined by different cultures that it's more difficult to arrive at what is morally right or wrong from one culture to the next culture. Power goes through all the cultures. Clearly, I think that a person who is in power in the culture in which I live is better off with good strong moral values.

Since, as the literature suggests, women have traditionally been the keepers of a society's moral values (see Chapter II), it is not surprising that women find it to be so necessary a part of power. Probably the majority of effective leaders in this country's academic community have always had strong moral values and been upholders of integrity and goodness, or at least we would hope so, whether they have been men or women, but at least it seems clear that this small representation of women leaders in this community share a high commitment to this value.

#### Being a Woman: Appropriate Roles

Almost all the interviewees were very definite that with the exception of childbearing, there was not a certain role that was appropriate for a woman that would not necessarily be appropriate for a man. Administrator C, for example, said that a woman is "a human being that happens to be of the female gender." This was in fact a recurring theme in all the interviews, the theme of being a person rather than a woman.

Administrator B was even more specific when discussing what an appropriate role for a woman would be.

I guess I just believe strongly in life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, so to speak. I think that's defined variously for many people. . . . Women, just like men, might choose to stay in a chemistry lab looking for a cure to cancer. They might similarly choose to crochet fluffy collars and everything in between, perhaps. So it seems to me the definition of a person's life should have a great amount of freedom in it to pursue that according to their abilities and interests. . . . I think those wonderful things that have been particular characteristics of women, I would hate for us to lose them. Maybe we want to share them more with men. I think the danger of women moving into the professional world--some people have researched and worked on this--is that they take on those characteristics which have historically been . . . male characteristics. Whether or not we'll wind up with more heart attacks and strokes at fifty is the issue, I think. So I think we are going through a very serious transition period of trying to define what is male and what is female.

Administrator D's first response in the interview clearly reflected this view that there is nothing that is definitely appropriate for a woman that is not also appropriate for a man, or vice versa.

I'd have to start by acknowledging that I'm a person without respect to that I'm a man or a woman. But I think in terms of being a woman, I'm sure that my reactions and interpretation of things may be different in part based on my gender, but I'm not sure in what way all of that is really true. . . . I often wonder how much of that's cultural and how much of that's really built in and so on.

Administrator E, too, mentioned immediately that "It's been hard work. It's been mental gymnastics. It's been emotional gymnastics. But, I guess that's really more part of being a human being than it's being a woman."

Even though they all acknowledged that there basically were few limitations in terms of role appropriateness, still all gave attention to the traditional role of childrearing as being a woman's role. Most offered that they were very happy being women. Administrator E said:

I don't think that if I had an opportunity to be something else that I would. I like what I am. I like what I do. I guess I like challenges, period, anyway life brings them. But then I like for some successes. I don't have to be successful in everything, but I like some successes. . . . So basically I see woman's role in our society not an overt kind of--no, I can't even say that because in some cases it is overt--the domination, the position that women are placed in in our society, the difficulty that women encounter as they try to come out of some of these socialized positions—I don't know whether that's really good or bad. . . . It does exist, and in many instances it is bad, but whether the bad overshadows the good or not, I can't tell, because I do think that there is a role that women have to play. They are physically closer to their children than anyone else. Whether that should or should not be, who is to say? We haven't seen enough of these [children] grow up who had fathers who shared that very closeness. We think it is a great idea, but I think we have to look at what the products are before we really know. . . . We have not had a time yet to look at what all of this is to each of the groups that are represented there, the fathers, the mothers, or the children. We think it is a good idea to have fathers more involved, but I don't think we know yet.

When I asked Administrator E about appropriate roles, she said:

I guess I tend to feel that the close role that women have with their children is one that I would probably think about guarding rather judiciously, but I have great difficulty in trying to define what is the exact role for any women based on something like sex, or race, or color, or what-have-you. It's just--people are so individual. Women like anyone else should as individuals satisfy their interests. If they want to go into corporate world, let it be. If they want

to stay home and be homemakers, let it be and work towards that end. But the classifications of the outside, the classifications made by outside people are wrong, just wrong. . . . I think that people are individuals. I just cannot get around that. . . . I think that most of my challenges . . . have come out of being a human being more than out of being a woman, and yet at the same time, I have felt that there were times that--[in] groups where I am the only woman or one of only two women out of a large group of persons-- . . . I can feel that there are differences that are made with me that I would rather were not made. There are some things that I would like to feel included in that I feel . . . I have been excluded from, for example, talk around the table, depending on who the individuals are. If the group is largely male, or all male except for me, maybe a thing like eye contact.

Administrator A also talked about how she enjoyed being a woman. She called it a "rewarding fulfilling experience, certainly a feeling of great self-worth." She indicated that the circumstances largely determine what's an appropriate role for a person.

I don't know of one role that is appropriate for a woman. You know, in my case, I started out thinking that my role in my family and my marriage was a secondary role in that my husband was in the corporate world. I was in very much a secondary role--the supporting wife and what have you--and illness caused our roles to be flip-flopped in that he lost his health in [his] forties and then I became in the primary role and he became secondary. [Supporting?] Yes, supporting. I've been in both roles, and I guess circumstances in some degree decide what's appropriate. It certainly did in my life. The circumstances were appropriate early for me to be secondary, but then I had to rise to the occasion when it was evident that he could no longer function. [And apparently you have done very well at it.] I have enjoyed it. It's been fun. I'm very thankful that I could adjust and not only be able to do that but have the capabilities, having had an adequate education. I had my degrees and so forth behind me so that I could make the transition not only professionally but personally. . . . It was not any great plan, and that's the other interesting thing

in my life. I didn't plan any of it. It was just sort of a natural order of things that I positioned myself to be able to take over the reins, so to speak.

Administrator D also talked about enjoying being a woman.

I enjoy being a woman. I feel good about it. I feel a kind of sensitivity and concern and caring that I think goes with some of the attributes that [women have] or choices that women make, and I find that that's important to me. On the other hand, as I say that, I don't want to suggest that men don't care and want things to be meaningful too, because a lot of men are very much that way and [there are] women who aren't particularly. But I do think that certain attributes that I identify with myself beyond being a person, being a woman, I think some of those characteristics of having a sense of compassion and having a real high need for being in touch with my values in relationship to any job that I may choose to take on. I feel a sense of concern about service--[in] what I do I need to see a service. Now whether that's related to being a woman or not I don't know, but I do know that that's true for me. And another thing that I feel that's probably characteristic of me in part because I'm a woman is that I'm a conceptualizer. I tend to not look at things narrowly. In fact, I tend to be intellectually quite challenged by a broad, diverse, very complex set of circumstances or problems, and almost have fun trying to make them make sense--how to make them interrelate to one another.

Administrator D emphasized that she did not think in terms of herself as a woman specifically very often.

. . . . I think in terms of being a person. I don't think in terms of being a woman particularly. Certainly when I think about myself as being a woman, I usually don't think about that except in terms of male-female relationships. . . . I think likely that's been helpful to me. I think a lot of people make a real distinction all the time in their minds. I really don't. It may mean that I'm not as sensitive as other people. I don't mean that in a negative or positive sense. I may not be as attuned--my antenna is probably not as attuned as other people's are to things that happen to them that they interpret to be because of their gender. Not always something as blatant as prejudice:



Somebody responding with a certain amount of threat, feeling threatened by my involvement in something that they might be uncomfortable about because I'm a woman. If I were a man doing the same thing they wouldn't be threatened by it. I've had other women say "That's what was going on when I saw that person treat you that way." [And you hadn't noticed it.] I hadn't interpreted it that way necessarily. . . . Now sometimes I do, and it's real blatant. But many times I don't interpret it that way. And I can think of possible reasons why that occurred. Not necessarily because of my gender. I think I'm really deliberately cautious about that because I think you can overinterpret that. Women can hurt themselves a great deal by assuming that everything of a certain variety that happens to them is because they're a woman. And I'm not sure that that's always true. . . . I'm really afraid to just label things like that and not look into it more deeply. At least be open to the idea that there may be other dynamics that cause that person to respond the way they did. There may be things that had to do with me that I have more control over than the fact that I'm a woman. . . . Or it may have something to do with something else going on with them. Or it may be a mixture of all those things, because it's generally more complex than that. So it's not that I'm unwilling to accept that that's going on, because there are times when it is clear to me, or times when someone else points it out and I say, "Well, yeah, well probably in that case you're right." And it helps me to understand the situation. But I do tend to probably err on the side of not interpreting it that way, because I don't find it terribly useful.

Administrator D specifically mentioned the procreation roles as being the only place where men and women clearly had different roles.

I don't think there's any role a woman shouldn't take on except the obvious procreation roles that a woman takes and a woman doesn't take. There are certain basic biological differences having to do with procreation. . . . I know that in society in this point and time there are a lot of things that women either don't do or can't do because of areas, or choose or feel they can't do or all those things--but I don't think theoretically or philosophically in terms of the notion that they can't do that, I just don't see those barriers, other than those social barriers that are there.

Administrator D, unlike Administrator E, did not feel that childrearing was necessarily a woman's realm, to be guarded judiciously. Likewise, she did not worry about the future children, fathers, and mothers who experienced the differences in roles that our culture is now adopting.

We do have social functions that society has to deal with and take care of and ensure are orderly, and handled in an orderly fashion. Now we think about child care. A lot of people think in terms of--well, the woman obviously does the child care. I don't think that's true. I think a woman is obviously the one that carries the child and gives birth to a child, but that's the end of it. . . . And I think every couple has to decide for themselves how they're going to work that out. That's just a matter of figuring out what the social roles are. I really don't think that a woman has any more special role than a man, and the man could do the bonding instead of the woman. I mean it's a choice we have to make. I do think, however, there's a responsibility for the child, in that somebody needs to do that in our society.

Unlike Administrator E, Administrator D has never been a parent.

### Role Models

When the women in this study spoke of their role models, and supporting people, they not only spoke of women, but also of men. Administrator B, for example, spoke of the "tapes" one received when one was growing up as being significant.

I think one cannot deny what one brings to the particular professional role. I think whatever tapes got put in you from your family, in my case, I think do affect you all your life, whether those are tapes from which you draw good or bad. In my case, I grew up with a very strong paternal role, with five brothers as well, and with a mother who was a very fine woman but certainly not the decision-maker in the family.

I never remember her being unhappy with any significant decisions, but . . . it was my father whose ability was trusted. And he would be the carer for us as far as financial securities. . . . I see both parents as defining value systems and so forth.

Administrator D also mentioned the importance of both her father and mother as role models.

My mother instilled in me more of a sense of comfort with compassion, comfort with caring and comfort with the emotionality associated with all of that, and enjoying it, enjoying those emotions--comfort with the aesthetic things, in fact an enjoyment of the aesthetic things: I think part of why I see administration as creative and why I recognize certain things I do, and certain feelings that come out of it. I feel like that was creative, sometimes when I do something. I feel like it's a creative act, like an artist almost, putting things together in a unique way and coming out with a solution to a problem, or going into a really difficult conflict situation, and resolving the conflict--not only feeling good about reaching a pinnacle of success in resolving the conflict for the betterment of everybody, but I will also reflect upon how that happened and actually enjoy the aesthetic quality of how that came about. . . . I think there is an aesthetic kind of thing that I picked up there of enjoying creativity of decision-making, enjoying creativity of situational maneuvering, to make something happen that is positive and good. I have a sense of wanting something to be positive and good, and I have a sense of wanting it to occur in a process that is creative and so on. I have as much fun with the process as with the product. I think there is an aesthetic quality to that which I call creativity. Now with my father, as I sit here saying how much my values need to resonate, how much I need to care about what I do and how much I have to feel that it's meaningful and that I'm making a contribution, I have to back off and say I'm not so sure that that's just related to being a woman, because actually that kind of feeling I got from my father more than probably my mother in that sense, at least in a career context. . . . I saw the excitement that he had, that he never would have had if he'd only been interested in the competition, or only interested in the power for power's sake, as if it were a game. I was definitely attracted to that sense of meaning.

Administrator C spoke specifically of her grandmother as being a role model who had impressed her with the importance of integrity.

Administrator D spoke of her mother as a role model, particularly giving her the value of adaptability.

There's a certain persistence and a certain compulsiveness about finishing things or about drawing closure that I attribute more to my father. Actually from my mother: whatever tolerance for ambiguity, whatever resilience that I have for being able to change course and adapt to a situation, to assess a situation and regroup it to fit reality, so that I can be effective perhaps in a different way than I had thought. . . . Now not everybody can do that, and I don't know what the difference is.

In addition to discussing their own role models, the interviewees also mentioned the importance of being role models for other women, some of them particularly noting that men were not strong role models for women, hence the necessity of having strong women role models. One of the responsibilities accompanying power, then, seems to be to serve this function of being a role model to others aspiring to the same goals. Almost all the interviewees, in this regard, took some time to discuss the fact that the numbers of women in power positions were, in fact, few, and that it was in a way, a "man's world." Some of the administrators even used this term. Almost all the interviewees mentioned at some point the fact that the political climate is changing for women, and that they were aware of themselves as being

agents on the vanguard of change. In this respect, their positions as role models are extremely critical, perhaps even more critical than role models are typically, since they are in effect change agents of the culture.

Administrator A spoke of her role as Vice president for Development as being non-traditional.

In my particular role it's very different and very fascinating because I am in external relations for the college. The traditional role for women in academia in higher education has been in the classroom or in the academic components of higher education. . . . I had rather strong reservations about whether or not I could function in a corporate world, so to speak, as opposed to the typical role model of a professor, or an academic dean. I gave it a great deal of thought. . . . In my case when I came into development in 1979, there were 2800 colleges and universities in the country and only 14 of them had chief development officers who were women. It has changed dramatically. It has been found that women make good development officers. They make good fundraisers and they make good marketing people and image bearers for institutions. So it's changing. For instance, when I came into this office, there was not a woman on the staff. I was it. Now of course, I do have several women on the staff, and we're pretty equally divided as far as men and women.

When I asked Administrator A what were some of the important ways she could influence people, she explained:

As a role model in that [this institution] does have a woman at its highest level other than the president. I have had any number of women on the staff tell me that it's good to have a role model at this level, and to some degree with students, but not to a large degree, because I don't have that much contact now with the students. I used to when I was deaning and when I was teaching, but not now, but I'm sure that they are aware that there is a woman at the highest level even though I don't have direct contact with them. For the women students of the college, I'm sure that it makes a difference.

Administrator B talked about the cultural assumptions that are awfully hard to overcome and overlook.

I am very aware that men are in most of the leadership roles in this country and now make most of the decisions, in my opinion. Intellectually I don't think that it is true that men make better decisions than women necessarily, but I think it's awfully hard to get away from that role. You just assume that women would be involved with lesser decision-making and responsibility-assuming. I think it's the old question of--I'm not sure if I want to be the president of anything--you know that somebody else could probably do a better job. I think that's the men-women thing there. . . . If you are schooled to think as our society's families do, that the male is the aggressor and the one who pursues relationships and women simply respond or reject, but they don't have a primary role, I think it's built in and stays with you for life.

Administrator B spoke specifically about the joy of being a role model for the younger women on campus.

The joy of administrative work for me though has been the development of other leaders, young women, staff people and student leaders, because there weren't many women for nineteen years here. Fixing the structures through which people could rise, I find very satisfying, and being a role model for women. That word "role model" is a late one on the scene, and I never saw myself deliberately as doing that, though I know it is what you do.

When Administrator B spoke about how being a woman influenced her in her administrative role, she again brought up the relationship between men and women.

I think that is a very good question. . . . If there are things that are intuitively womanly, again it may be the tapes. . . . I really do believe that women may think differently from men. Because we have felt ourselves in second place most of the time, I think we listen very carefully. I do. I try to think, you know, what this person is thinking, how they are viewing this; and thus my administrative input into various structures has been to be very careful, thoughtful, clear, and never use being a woman

in any kind of accusing or derogatory way. I think that one thing that has really hurt the women's movement is the men-hating women. I think there are a lot of angry women who feel that all these problems are something that men have done. It is like the slavery issue: I don't have slaves; you don't have slaves; and where we have still a lot of things to work through, I think to feel somehow divisive with the men who we are in administrative relationships with is to lose. So I see myself as part of a team with a perfect freedom to express my views and I will do so. I do try to be careful that it is never at the negation of other men or women. I must admit that I am in meetings where most of the people in them are men. I have been in many things where I was the only woman. . . . Of course we have many more [women] faculty than when I came here. I'm delighted to have someone else to deal with some of the issues, whereas for many years, I felt if it got said regarding women, I had to be the one to say it, and that gets a little heavy. So when you're a very small percentage in the structure, I think it is harder, and you're more sensitive to it.

Administrator C spoke of being a role model as being a specifically appropriate role for a woman to have an impact:

Being a woman [doesn't influence my job] other than to be a role model for other women. Basically that would be it--to let other women know that there is a place for you above that of secretary, and that the administration is very open, and they believe in equal opportunities.

Later on, she mentioned the responsibilities that go along with being a role model:

I realize that I live in a glass house, so I must be careful with how I act and how I respond. The simple kind of interaction that someone would have with me I would have to think about it before I respond. If I were not in the position and someone would yell and be unhappy, and I would yell and be unhappy back, in the position that I am in I have to make sure that I don't set the wrong example--that I respond like the book says you ought to respond. I must make sure that I give the right impression. I think I represent the university as I speak.

Administrator C also spoke of the predominance of men in the academic arena.

In the academic setting, it's more of a man's world. Men are the deans and the chancellors, the vice chancellors.\* They are the ones with the authority and the power. . . .

She went on to discuss the importance of women dealing with women as role models. She talked particularly about Mary McCloud Bethune forming the National Negro Women, and also talked about a woman at her own university:

We had a woman who retired last year. She was not at the Dean's level or Vice-Chancellor level. She was an Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. She was very articulate, very highly respected, and because of the way she carried herself around campus, a lot of women emulated her. There are plenty of men, but women don't emulate men. So you must have some women in some roles that are above the dean's level for women to aspire to get it. . . . Everybody is not going to come to you and say you are a role model, but you can tell. Then you must become aware of it and make sure that you do leave positive and good impressions as opposed to negative ones.

#### Relationship of Credentials to Power

Another subject that emerged from the interviews without any prompting was the subject of the necessity of credentials.

Administrator A mentioned early in the interview that having her credentials established enabled her to be able to make the transition from homemaker to faculty member when her husband's health failed. Later, when I asked her

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\*She excludes herself, even though she is above the level of dean.



what the nature of a woman's power was, she again mentioned credentials.

Available to her would be her credentials and her capabilities and her ways of dealing with people. All of those would be means for using power, if you develop credentials at certain levels of whatever you are working out.

Administrator B noted the importance of credentials now as opposed to when she started,

I think they are very important. I think from the beginnings of one's professional career on through, I think the things you accomplish are how you are measured and rightly so. I hired staff for twenty years, and I certainly looked for things other than paper facts about people. I looked for things they were really interested in doing that they did well, situations they had affected. You have called me Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. I don't have a doctorate. I think, though, if I was coming up through the ranks now, I would be ruled out if I didn't have a doctorate. . . . I think they would only look for someone with a doctorate. I do think credentials are the ticket and I think there's something good and something bad about that. I hate that good people are ruled out because they don't have the credentials, but I think the credentials are only the starting point. I think after that it's the things you do well and some good qualifications for another batch of work.

Administrator C, who also did not have a doctorate, brought up the subject of degrees in reference to her own credentials.

The people I interact with on a regular basis are Ph.D.'s and upward. I have a B.S. degree. I don't have a problem with it. I guess I'm saying in some instances the degree that they have helps them to be more powerful in their jobs, where I don't need it. . . . It may be that in order for them to be in the job that they are in they may need a Ph.D. They may say a woman must be more qualified than the male counterpart to get the same job--I don't know. I've never applied for a job.

Administrator D was unabashedly unfavorable toward attributing power to credentials.

I do think people attribute a lot of power to credentials. I frankly find it very distasteful. I look upon education at all levels that you get, that you acquire, that you go into, because you need the material, and you need that background that that provides in order to be more effective, which is power--power by substance. I don't find it at all attractive; in fact, I find it a bit irritating; in fact, repulsive at times; the degree to which we have a credentialing mentality in the society, but it is there. I am perfectly willing to use my credentials when I need to, because it's a practical matter. You notice I don't have diplomas on my walls. I've never had my diplomas on my walls. I really don't even know where they are. They are at home. I'd really much rather have pictures. You know, I get very irritated when, especially in education, we get into these professional credentialing things, probably the MBA or the MPA would probably be a much more effective background to help prepare superintendents and principals. Instead they all have to have a doctorate just because they want to be called doctor."

She continued with a discussion of how she really preferred not to be called "Dr. \_\_\_\_\_," but felt she had no other alternative when she arrived at her position, because of the various connotations associated with Mrs. Miss, and Ms., none of which she felt she was able to choose. She was not married, she did not want the connotation of "Miss," and she did not want to be associated with feminism as a political view, so she fell back on her credentials.

An area related to credentials is authority. The administrators all mentioned the authority that was granted them by their institution as an important source of their power.

### Giving One's Power Away

Another emerging theme from the interviewees was how one gets to be unpowerful or powerless, or gives her power away.

Ironically, when I asked Administrator A what made her feel unpowerful, I got the first admission that she had power, by using a negative phraseology in the question. She said that what makes her feel unpowerful is

frustration. When I can't get a decision or something like that is the only time I ever think about it. It's not that your power is blocked or thwarted, you just can't get . . . [a decision]. Frustration is the time that I feel less powerful. That doesn't happen often. Usually there are circumstances that you're well aware of as to why something can't move. . . . Somehow the decisions have got to be made, and it's got to be wrestled with, and I'm very frustrated at this point just trying to work it all out.\*

Administrator B noted several ways that women could hurt themselves in their quest for power, or their rise to power. One way she noted very insightfully was being "angry" or hating men for their lack of power.

I try to . . . never use being a woman in any kind of accusing or derogatory way. I think one of the things that has really hurt the woman's movement is the men-hating women. I think there are a lot of angry women who feel that all these problems are something that men have done. It is like the slavery issue: I don't have slaves. You don't have slaves. And where

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\*By default, of course, the implication is that when she is not thus frustrated, she does feel powerful. I did not ask this question, and my guess is that she would have denied it as she did every other time I rephrased her explanations of when she had power, but the implication is still there.

we still have a lot of things to work through, I think to feel somehow divisive with the men who we are in administrative relationships with is to lose.

Administrator A made this same point after the interview was over, stating that women who have risen to power have had to be careful not to alienate the men who were already there and obviously in a position to stop the women's rise to power.

Administrator D said that women sometimes "undermine their capacity for being powerful . . . by being a little girl, a little feminine girl, talking with a high pitched voice."

I think there are some personal attributes women have got to get out of their behavior that have been reinforced for them when they were little girls. Little girl behaviors that worked well with dad and mom when they were little don't work well later. Theirs is power, manipulative power, but they're very irritating to people, and they don't end up being taken seriously.

Administrator D indicated that there were ways of expressing one's femininity that were not irritating, "a sort of warmth and a sort of touching kind of thing," that had actually helped her move ahead smoothly in a predominantly male world. She had even been told by others that these qualities of hers made her non-threatening to the men with whom she worked, because she was very comfortable with her femininity: "You express it, you radiate it, you dress it. You don't come in with your blue suit and your red [tie] and this kind of stuff."

Administrator D also mentioned the kind of situation alluded to by Administrator A, where in the words of Administrator D, she gets "locked off at the knees" by someone's power play so that she finds herself "with a ball and chain." Her answer, out of a power perspective, according to this researcher, is to "try to be adaptable and shift or change" just as she did in the extended example she provided.

Another way one gets to be unpowerful, implied by Administrator D in her discussion, is simply to define one's circumstances as defeat. She contemplated this in reference to her career decision:

So I began to assess the situation and recognize that the only act that I could take that would help order get restored on the campus, and would help . . . carry out the aim that they were obviously indicating all across the country they wanted, was for me to step aside. The question was how could I step aside and not do it either in a feeling or an impression of defeat. I had no intention of doing that. How can I use that act in a positive way; to make something happen that is socially positive . . . even if I see the down side? How can I bring out the positive?

The quality mentioned by Administrator C that created powerlessness is lack of information.\*

Let me tell you how I feel very powerless. I have one area of my supervision which is telecommunications. It is a relatively new area coming to me--I have had it at least two years. I know nothing about telecommunications. Now when I go to meetings, and I have been to a couple of them . . . I listen and get some information. The more I get the more I need, because when they would talk about something I did not know anything about,

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\*This brings up one subject that was surprisingly seldom mentioned in the interviews, but is almost a cliché in the popular literature, that knowledge is power.

I wanted to know more. I have a good friend who is in telecommunications. She is learning, and I sent her to all the workshops, all the trainings, all the shows, because we have got to do something with telecommunications. Pretty soon I too want to be involved. I don't have time to be involved now, so I want her to learn as much as possible. I feel completely powerless when we talk about telecommunications. Lack of knowledge: I don't like the feeling and I am going to do something about it. I will feel in control . . . and that is part of feeling powerful.

Administrator E discussed two ways in which women (or anyone, she emphasized) could lose their power. One was by failing to plan. She said, "Planning is to me future-oriented, and a failure to plan is almost a certainty to fail, and I feel very strongly about the planning function." The second, most important one, was by failing to make a decision that was theirs to make.

If the leader fails to make a decision, that decision in time somebody else will make. You can be sure of that. One way or the other, some person or persons will make the decision and then will take the action. . . . If it has to do with decisioning all the leader has to do is fail to do it. . . . One of the ways to lose power is to fail to make a decision at a time that decisions must be made, and most especially when the decisions are hard.

On this subject, Administrator B noted, however, that power could sometimes come out of not making a decision.\*

You know it's powerful to make no decisions--you just let things set. You have made a default, a decision not to do something, in a sense. Sometimes you control things by leaving them on your desk.

Administrator B did note the importance for her of being involved in decisions. In response to the question "What makes you feel unpowerful?" she responded:

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\*The implication is that no one but the one choosing not to make the decision is empowered to make it instead.

I have to go back to my tapes, I think when I hear those that tell me that women's opinions are not very much, what I sense that that's happening, that decisions are being made that I have no say in or are different from those I would say. I hear those powerful tapes saying "But men will really make the decisions. Men is where the power is." I also think that women can cut themselves off by some of the quote "feminine wiles," whatever those are. Those are very dangerous or just simply lazy, and I think some women don't want much power, don't really need to be very influential. They are satisfied with the traditional role and that's all right. I know many men don't want much power either.

The third way mentioned by Administrator E that a person would lose power is by losing the intense interest that they had in order to get to the position of power in the first place.

They can demonstrate that they really didn't have what everybody thought they had to arrive at a state of power. I think they can lose . . . the intense interest in whatever it is that they are doing. I think you must have an interest in what you're doing to be in power in that area. If you lose that intensesness, I think you can lose the power that goes with it there, because there's something that the leader, the powerful one, has to demonstrate in terms of priorities.

Administrator B also adopted a sociological perspective in response to this question of where powerlessness comes from.

I think it's from some social structure. I have had some interest in the whole Judeo-Christian Movement and what that influence has been. . . . I think power is not always learned: it's given. I think there are many people who think women should stay at home, pregnant and barefoot. There are many extremes. One

is they ought to be wives and mothers, and there are many who think they [women] cannot handle tough decisions, and if they can stay there that gives men more power. I think there's still a lot of male chauvinism. It's unfortunate. [When you say that kind of powerlessness is given, it sort of means it's imposed?] Out of the controlled structure, economic, political. I think some real efforts have been made to change it. Some of it's given, some simply planned. I think there are a lot of women whose first priority is to be loved. We see this on college campuses. Emotional needs sometimes just wash out other things, and I pray for time to get them through this. Adolescence is very difficult.

I think women have a lot of power that they have not used. I think we are trying to do it right. We do that in lots of ways. I'm careful about how I dress, about how I present myself verbally. I don't try to come on as a strong man. I try also not to cry often, though I adored the fact that . . . the woman who's never run for President . . . cried, even though they called her a cry baby: but I think we are saying that softness is a part of what we are.

#### Other Significant Minor Themes

Conflict. A subject mentioned by Administrator B as being important was the dealing with conflict.

I've loved figuring out what other administrators were all about. I see myself as something of a peacemaker. I have difficulty when I know there is tension between . . . administrators and students or faculty and administration. . . . I find myself frequently trying to explain one side to the other side because I don't thrive on conflict, and I try to put out those brush fires.

Administrator D, too, in her extensive discussions of problem-solving, emphasized the area of conflict-resolution.

Sometimes when I do something, I feel like it's a creative act, like an artist almost, putting things together in a unique way and coming out with a solution to a problem, or going into a real difficult conflict situation and resolving the conflict. Not only feeling good about reaching a pinnacle of success in resolving



the conflict for the betterment of everybody, but I will also reflect upon how that happened and actually enjoy the aesthetic quality of how that came about.

Likewise, Administrator A, in her discussion of her "collaborative administrative style," mentioned the importance for her of being a good conflict resolver.

Interacting with important people. Another way in which several of the interviewees indicated that they knew they were powerful was by interacting with and getting feedback from important and powerful people. Administrator B, for example, said that she feels powerful when she is writing something that she knows will be read by important people. Administrator C said that she feels powerful when she is interacting with powerful people. Administrators A, B, and E said that they feel important when they are serving on decision-making bodies with important people.

Administrator C specifically mentioned getting feedback from the President and Vice-Presidents that she is doing a good job as making her feel proud and good. She noted that these people were her source of power, later in the interview. Certainly it makes sense that to be acknowledged by your source of power would be an empowering feeling. She indicated, reciprocally, that she liked to reward her subordinates in a similar manner.

Getting things done. Administrators C and E emphasized the importance of getting things done as something that

gave them a real sense of power. In fact, those were areas of central emphasis for these two administrators. Both seemed to measure both themselves and their subordinates by their task accomplishment. Administrator C talked about the significance to her of knowing that she could make a phone call and "something will be done." When I asked her what feeling was associated with knowing that a phone call from her will definitely get results, she said, "Well, I had not thought about it as a special feeling. I just know that when I put it on my pad or say to my secretary, 'Check downstairs in about an hour and let me know,' I'm through with that."

Administrator E talked about getting things done (especially through motivating her subordinates to do them) as making her feel successful, which gave her a sense of power.

That relates to my definition of what power really is, because I like to see the things that I am attempting to be very successful. When I see people work very hard to try to help me get to where we've defined where we want to go, I feel powerful."

Saying "I like challenges, period, any way life brings them; but then I like for some successes," Administrator E candidly admitted that she likes successes, just as did Administrator D, who also made some connection of power with accomplishment, saying, "I like being in a position of seeing the fruits of my own labor."

In talking about getting things done, Administrator D mentioned specifically her quality of persistence:

I'm a very persistent person. I stay on course on things. In fact, persistent to a fault at times. My mother said that when I was little I'd be in a sand box playing with a bunch of kids. Everybody else would get bored. You know how kids will do, and go off to do something else, and I'd stay there and finish the project and then I'd go off, that kind of thing. There's a certain persistence and a certain compulsiveness about finishing things or about drawing closure that I attribute more to my father. Actually, from my mother whatever tolerance for ambiguity, whatever resilience that I have for being able to change course and adapt to a situation, to assess a situation and regroup it to fit reality, so that I can be effective perhaps in a different way than I had thought. I can't help but think of the \_\_\_\_\_ situation, because that's what I had in spades.

Administrator D reflected some of the same qualities of being "through" with something as did Administrator C.

Also when I finished doing the writing, everybody else was still fluttering around, and I thought, "Well, I'm done. I made the decision, I got the thing written up, leave them to type it." I went back to the hotel by myself to get some rest, because I had to take on another job the next day.

Being a survivor. Another quality in the conceptual framework was that of being a survivor. Administrator A noted this quality in her discussion of accepting the changes brought on by her husband's health, and Administrator B noted this quality in her decision to become a career woman and reject the typical female role. Administrator D, too, spoke extensively of this quality as contributing to her power.

I will not say, "Oh no, I couldn't do that," or "I'm too nervous, I'm not going to do that," or try to avoid it. I will simply go into it feet first, and I think, always say to myself, "Look, I'm a survivor. I know I'm a survivor. I feel like a survivor. I guess I have this inner feeling and I can't explain why I have this inner feeling that no matter what I do, I'm going to be okay. I think I'm awfully hard on myself at



to me, but idea relationships. I enjoy the conceptualization process . . . .

### Bi-Directional Power

While all the interviewees recognized the organizational component of power, that it is somehow granted from above, they also expressed a sense of power's needing to be granted from below as well. Administrator C talked about having necessary support from one's subordinates; Administrator A talked about her collaborative style of working with her subordinates to make a decision so she would have their support. Administrator D discussed asking for faculty input before she made a decision.

A final point that was brought out strongly by Administrator E in our first interview, and was summarized briefly in the second was that of power moving in both directions-- up and down. Power is granted from above, she emphasized, but it is also granted from below, if it is earned by the supervisor's effectiveness.

What it is that makes the power be there really generates or really comes from below. Any time the leader succeeds in making the people feel that the leader cannot truly deliver what they think the leaders are there to deliver, what they always felt the leader had, then the power begins to crumble.

### Woman's "Intuition"

One quality of women that is rampant in the folklore is that of feminine intuition. This subject did not escape

notice of the interviewees, even though none of my questions addressed it.

Administrator A noted that her other vice-presidents had often commented that she "picked up on" things that they didn't even notice, but she discounted it as being anything very major. She did say, however, "I think in my years of working that there is some type of intuition that women have."

Administrator B also brought up the subject. She said she had always wondered about "what is in the vernacular called 'woman's intuition.'" She later offered, herself, what might be an explanation for it, in that women tend to notice things more closely and listen more carefully, since they have historically been in "second place." In response to the question "How does the experience of being a woman influence your role as an administrator?" she said:

I think you do, if there are things that are intuitively womanly, again it may be the tapes . . . I really do believe that women may think differently from men because we have felt ourselves in second place most of the time. I think we listen very carefully. I do. I try to think, you know, what this person is thinking, how they are viewing this, and thus my administrative input into various structures has been very careful, thoughtful and clear.

Later, when I asked Administrator B if she thought there was a certain kind of power that was "woman's power," she mentioned intuition again.

That's one of those I'm still wrestling with, if there is something unique about woman's intuition. I think I'm real happy about there being role differences,

as one perceives in men and women, feeling intuitive-ness and perception. I think that's sort of a healthy balance. I think it's intriguing. I think maybe there is a woman's power.

Later, when Administrator B was talking about some of the ways she had had to use to cope in a predominantly man's world, the subject of intuition came up again.

I think there's something intuitive about knowing when to speak with regard to power that gives you power, because I think power is seen as positive for men, probably negative for women.

Administrator D labeled herself as an intuitive person, and offered the words "introspective" and "reflective" as alternatives, providing some insight as to her explanation of the phenomenon of intuition.

Administrator E acknowledged that "women in life are forced to look a little more closely at people relationships than men generally do," but she thought that this was not what intuition is, really.

The following chapter analyzes against the background of contributing literature and personal reflections the following themes which emerged from the interviews: intense commitment to goals, connection to love, necessity of action, connection with adaptability, getting others to align with one's goals, accepting one's circumstances, power and creativity, empowering other people, integrity and "goodness," giving one's power away, and not defining one's circumstances as defeat.

## CHAPTER V

## ANALYSIS

Analysis of Recurring Themes

In my own reflections about power, there were several important qualities that had significance for me as a researcher:

1. The connection of power with an intense commitment to a goal
2. The connection of power with love
3. The necessity of action
4. The connection with adaptability
5. The ability to get others to align with one in meeting one's goal
6. The necessity of accepting one's circumstances
7. The connection of power with creativity or lateral thinking
8. The action of empowering other people
9. The necessity of operating out of integrity or "goodness"
10. The potential of giving one's power away to others
11. The determination to not define one's circumstances as defeat.

The interviewees in this study echoed and resonated with these points in several important ways.



Intense Commitment to Goals

Administrator E made as one of her most emphatic points the notion that a woman in power must have an intense commitment to her goals. She said, "I think you must have an intense interest in what you're doing to be in power in that area. If you lose that intenseness, I think you can lose the power that goes with it." And in my first interview with Administrator E, that was one of her major points, which she only briefly summarized in our second interview. In the first interview, she gave credit to her intense commitment to her organization and its goals for being one of the sources of her own power. Administrator D, too, in her extensive comments about how her values must resonate with the organization's commitments, reflects this same quality of intense commitment. Administrator D, in fact, would have that to be a precondition for allying herself with any organization, and she definitely made it clear that if she could not make that intense commitment, she would not connect herself with that group. Administrator B, too, in her continuing discussion of how one must uphold certain principles that "are just not to be changed," echoes that kind of intense commitment that she herself has to the values she believes in. Administrators C and E, both from the same university, spent much of the interview talking about the importance of meeting the goals of their organization, and just from the intensity of their discussion it was clear that they both had a commitment to meeting those goals.

Connection to Love

In their discussions of values and principles, most of the interviewees resonated some connection to the principle I had voiced that power is connected to love. Administrator A, in a unique way, owes her powerful position to an action she made out of love, much the same way that my mother received power in community organizations and in the educational system when she dedicated her life to the care of my mentally retarded sister. Administrator A "rose to the occasion" when her husband's health failed and their roles "flipped-flopped." She did not say whether she would have pursued this role if his health had not failed, and in a way it is a moot point, because his health did fail and she went to work to support the family. Her younger son, at that point, was about 11 years old, and her older son was about 19, so her financial support of the family was essential, in all probability. Although some might suggest that she just did what she had to do, or that she might have been inclined to do that anyway, those are all hypothetical questions, because the facts that she states are that she entered the workforce because her husband's health failed, at her approximate age of 40, and her rise to power within her institution has followed that event. It is not too great a leap of faith to conjecture that she made that move out of love for her family, and out of the necessity for her to act.

Several of the administrators mentioned another kind of love--caring. Administrator B mentioned several times the importance of doing things out of interest for others or the common good, not for "personal gains" or "self-interest," and she mentioned the necessity of using power so that the most people benefit, which is a kind of caring or love. Having an intense commitment to something can be related to love, too. It was love that enabled my mother to make an intense commitment to her new career of special education when she responded to my sister's needs.

When all of the administrators spoke of their need to be mentors and role models, and expressed that they found power in that, that was related to love, too. There is a real and genuine caring in empowering others. Administrators A and D, too, spoke specifically of giving back to the community in the form of service, another act of love.

Another demonstration of the way power and love are connected came in the extensive discussion of Administrator D of her recent administrative decision, in which she made a choice to step down from a presidency she had been offered and had accepted in order to serve a larger civil rights cause. There was a very real way, as she expressed it, that she was making the only choice she could make, given the volatility of the situation, and the impassioned involvement of the press and the student community. It was quite possible, in other words, that if she had not chosen to resign, she might have

been asked to resign. By making the choice herself, she took the reins and did not define her situation as defeat. She made a definite action formed from an intense commitment to the school she had chosen to serve, and she made a decision that advocated the students she had committed to, which is a decision made out of love. Again and again in her discussion of this difficult decision, she emphasized that she accepted her circumstances and adapted to them creatively. This ability to adjust, she said, was what she "had in spades," for which she gave her mother credit.

By making this decision, which was totally out of integrity and goodness, and was not motivated at all by self-interest, as she expressed it, she empowered the students she supported in a way that possibly only this situation allowed her to do. This ability to receive the circumstances given by the universe moved her forward positively and productively in spite of apparent adversity, even turning adversity into advantage.

In a way, this lovely story that she shared in our interview adds a fourth role model to my reflections, because I would submit that this situation involved all of the attributes that I had come to believe to be a part of genuine feminine power. And as Administrator D herself pointed out, there is a very real sense in which this institution had chosen the right person to be its president, even though she ultimately stepped aside.

Because this situation, as it was played out, received wide press because of its related civil rights issues, she was able to also serve as a role model for educational administrators everywhere, both men and women. It is in this manner that feminine power can have an important impact.

### The Necessity of Action

The third point, the necessity of action, is obvious in the above example, and the discussion with Administrator D made it clear that she is otherwise too very decisive and prone to action, not indecision. Administrator E, too, spoke in great detail about the necessity of action to power, and indicated that the way one became powerless was to avoid a decision that one was supposed to make. Along with this, Administrator E emphasized the responsibility one has when one is in power to make the decisions that a role requires. This echoes Rollo May's remarks (1972) in reference to power, that if we deny it or ignore it, we set up a contradiction that leads us away from our responsibilities as the ones who hold power. If we hold power, and we deny it or ignore it, we may leave it in the hands of someone else who would misuse it. This seems to be a very important charge for women in power to take seriously so that they may engage earnestly in the business of being proper stewards of the power they have.

There were a few troubling areas in regard to this subject in the interview. Probably the most troubling was the number of times the interviewees, with the exception of Administrator D, denied that they had power. During the rest of their discussions it was apparent that they did have power and did use it, but if Rollo May is right about the contradiction that is set up when one who is supposed to be in power denies it or ignores it, then it may be possible that these women are unintentionally and even unwittingly giving away part of their power.

Administrator A was particularly noteworthy in denying her power, having denied it no fewer than 30 times during the course of the interview. A few other remarks added to this statistic together create a slightly troubling scenario in regard to a potential self-fulfilling prophecy there. She said early in the interview that it was often appropriate to let circumstances decide what one's role in life is to be, as almost an apology for her being in a position of power, as she explained about her husband's health. If she denies that she has power, and then lets circumstances decide what role she is to play rather than taking the responsibility for the power she has now, she could fulfill the role Rollo May warns us about and allow her power to fall into the hands of someone else who would misuse it.

Even if we deny power out of modesty, as might have been the case with Administrator A, and as definitely seemed the

case with Administrator B, we cannot sidestep May's prediction, because he involves no motive attribution in his explanation, and it would seem to matter very little what our reason for denying it had been, if it did in fact end up out of our control and in the control of someone who would misuse it.

Women seem, in a way, reluctant to see themselves as powerful people. Administrator B captured this.

I am very aware that men are in most of the leadership roles in this country and now make most of the decisions, in my opinion. Intellectually I don't think that it is true that men make better decisions than women necessarily, but I think it's awfully hard to get away from that role. You just assume that women would be involved with lesser decision-making and responsibility-assuming. I think it's the old question of--I'm not sure if I want to be the president of anything, you know, that somebody else could probably do a better job. I think that it's the men-women thing there.

All the interviewees deferred in some way to the power of men in the interviews, although for Administrator D it was just a recognition of her "programming" from her parents that she should have a career in case her husband died or some similar catastrophic need. (This seemed, in practice, to be what occurred in the life of Administrator A.) Administrator B also spoke of her "tapes," knowing it was her father who made the decisions, and thus growing up with the assumption that men made the decisions, at least the important ones.

Administrator C openly acknowledged that the academic arena is a "man's world," another subtle form of denying her own power, and both she and Administrator B spoke of the senior

administrators at their schools being men, very telling "slips," since they themselves make up part of the senior administrative team. In a similar slip, Administrator A said, "Of course, the President is a man."

All the administrators except Administrator D spoke of the small number of female administrators at their level. Administrator A offered that when she took her position she was one of 14 women out of 2800 people in the United States holding her position--one-half of one percent. Administrator B noted her awareness that we had been in "second place most of the time" and remarked about the impact it had had on her actions.

For many years, I felt if it got said regarding women, I had to be the one to say it, and that gets a little heavy. So when you're a very small percentage in the structure, I think it is harder and you're more sensitive to it.

Of course, the numbers were probably accentuated for Administrator B since she was one of the first female administrators in a historically male school.

Administrator E was aware that she was in the minority as a female in the higher ranks of administration at her institution, but she was not aware of the specific percentage until I offered it to her. She seemed interested when I told her that nationally women represented only an average of 1% of the senior administrators, and she seemed honestly surprised when I told her that of the 12 institutions in my study, only



6 had a woman represented above the level of dean. She was only slightly consoled by the fact that at least two of those six were at her institution, saying, "Well, it is probably better, but how good is it comparatively if the picture is so bleak totally?"

Administrator E spoke of the ways she had to defer to men sometimes, in order to function effectively in her job. She mentioned being excluded from the eye contact when she was at a meeting where she was the only woman, or one of very few women in a group of powerful men. In the first interview, she talked at length about the strategy she had developed for coping with this fact, which was to contact all of the board or committee members ahead of time and tell them individually what she was going to say at the meeting. This must have been a tedious and time-consuming task, and yet it worked. Further, it is indicative of the kind of power that in my reflections seemed to me to be a quality of female power, in that she accepted her circumstances and came up with a creative program to manage them, rather than trying to change them or demand that they be different. She engaged in positive action rather than in resistance.

It is noteworthy that the creative program undertaken in this instance by Administrator E is an active program, which is one of the requisites I reflected upon for power. It might be true that this requisite is one that is most

nearly foreign to women if they do tend to be archetypally receptive rather than active as Jung has suggested. However, in my own personal reflections upon power in women, I have noted that receptivity is not the same as passivity, and that there can be real power through being receptive to experiences rather than resisting them, because it allows one to expend one's energies in action rather than resistance.

#### Connection with Adaptability

The predominant theme of adaptability surfaced from Administrator D, who indicated that that was what she had "in spades" in her difficult administrative decision. She was able to adjust her expectations and her actions according to the experience and the events that were occurring, which empowered her to be able to turn the potential defeat into an achievement. This, according to Viktor Frankl, is the ultimate of what humans are capable of--to turn a defeat into an accomplishment.

For what then matters is to bear witness to the uniquely human potential at its best, which is to transform a personal tragedy into a triumph, to turn one's predicament into a human achievement. When we are no longer able to change a situation . . . we are challenged to change ourselves. (1984, p. 135)

There is a way in which it is true that the only quality of an experience we have control over is ourselves, and this is a really empowering realization, because it enables us to take action in a case that might otherwise lock us in defeat and discouragement. I remember the several times that

Administrator D accentuated during the interview that in this situation she was not defeated, she was not depressed, she was simply taking a different course from the one she had previously chosen.

Administrators A and C also demonstrated adaptability when they undertook the administrative roles they were invited to take, rather than staying in their safe faculty and secretarial roles, even though they had not sought promotions. From a personal perspective, I might note that it also requires a huge measure of adaptability to raise young children while maintaining a professional persona in the work force, and this is a task effectively undertaken by Administrators A, C, and E.

#### Getting Others to Align with One's Goals

Probably the strongest point emphasized again and again by Administrator E was the necessity of getting others to align with her in meeting her goals. This was what she called motivation, and it seemed to be an essential component of her definition of power.

Administrators A, B, and E all mentioned the experiences of serving on important advisory boards and committees where the dominant membership was male. They all indicated that it was a very powerful feeling (although Administrator A, of course, did not accept the WORD "power") to effectively persuade or influence these individuals to align with their goals.

The word that Administrator A offered that she preferred over power was leadership, which is a term that in itself implies getting others to align with one's goals, unlike other terms she could have chosen such as ability, strength, force, superiority, effectiveness, energy, aptitude, potential, and the list could go on. (See Chapter I.)

Persuasion and influence were, in fact, the definitions of power that surfaced most frequently among all the interviewees. (See Chapter IV.) The women interviewed never chose as their own definition of power any word that would imply dominion over others. The words that came closest were control or authority, and the peculiar slant given to these words did not reflect command and supremacy so much as they did control over oneself and authority as being the source of power. In all cases where the women were talking about their own power, they spoke more about influencing, acting, and getting things done, especially insofar as they influenced others to do them.

#### Accepting One's Circumstances

The quality of accepting one's circumstances has already been addressed above in the section of adaptability. It is essential that one accept one's circumstances before one can adapt to them. It is not possible to adapt to someone's circumstances while one is still expending energy resisting them, denying them, or trying to change them.

In a way, Administrator B drew power from this quality when she accepted the circumstances of her broken romances and decided to take action and enroll in graduate school and pursue a professional career, because, in her words, she was "not going to be a nobody."

Likewise, Administrator A drew power from this quality when she accepted the reality of her husband's failing health. Similarly, Administrator D drew power from this quality when she accepted the realities of the career situation she was in in order to adapt to them and take a new creative stance that would move the situation in a different direction.

#### Power and Creativity

Much has already been said above about using one's creative powers and lateral thinking in the sections on action and adaptability. The creative action undertaken by Administrator D requires no further discussion. Her creative and courageous decision to resign from a position she had been promoted into in order to support a larger human rights issue was a decisive action firmly founded in lateral thinking. She referred to this movement at one point as a "sidestep."

Administrator E, too, used creativity in coming up with an approach to manage the lack of eye contact and recognition she was getting in the predominantly male meetings she was attending. When she undertook to contact each member ahead

of time, that was an unusual and bold move, designed to effect success by altering the circumstances in one's favor.

Administrator C, in developing day-to-day solutions to common problems such as the lack of name tags, the lack of privacy for the visiting general, and the lack of recognition to her staff, demonstrates an ongoing and multi-level creativity. This administrator, in fact, characterized "risk-taking" as being something female, a particular quality of being a woman. This is contrary to a common perception of women, that they are oriented more toward security than risks, but it can be at least in part explained by Administrator B's comment that women have been in second place for so long. In a way, therefore, they have little to lose by taking a risk.

#### Empowering Other People

All the administrators spoke of empowering other people, whether it be subordinates, through delegation and support, discussed by Administrator A, or whether it be by praise and recognition, mentioned most prominently by Administrator C, or whether it be by collegiality and cooperation, mentioned most frequently by Administrators A and D, or whether it be by mentoring and role modeling, discussed most intensively by Administrators B and D, but mentioned in fact by all the interviewees.

In fact, the very definitions of power chosen by the women in this study are empowering definitions, because they chose words like motivation, influence, and persuasion, words that imply getting others to do things in such a way that the one who completes the task will get part of the credit, unlike words like control, command, or force.

### Integrity and "Goodness"

A running theme of all the interviews, significant because it was not solicited by a question by the interviewer, was the theme of "principles and values," in the words of Administrator B; or "resonating with my values," in the words of Administrator D; or "being in awe of power so that it will not be misused or abused," in the words of Administrator A; or "responsibility and moral values," in the terms of Administrator E; or the term of Administrator C, "integrity." Administrator B spoke specifically of the responsibility she felt women had to have a "cleaner power" as they inherited it from the men, and there did seem to be a sense of power having been abused in the past by the ones who held it (men). This sense of power having been abused in the past came most strongly from Administrator A, who was probably influenced by her institution's recent study of the Holocaust.\*

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\*It is obvious that the abuse of power is not the only lesson to be learned from the Holocaust; however, it is just the one that Administrator A chose to learn or concentrate on. So it is not necessary to qualify her statements overzealously. When I interviewed Administrator A, I had just completed Viktor

### Giving One's Power Away

All the administrators had definite ideas about how a woman could abdicate her power, or give it away, becoming unpowerful or powerless.

Administrators A and D discussed the frustration of having their decisions blocked by others or by circumstances as being an unpowerful feeling. Administrators B and E discussed the importance of making decisions too, noting that when one did not make the decisions one was called upon to make, one effectively gave away her power. In a similar vein, another way noted by Administrator E that a person can become powerless or give away her power is by failing to plan.

Administrators B and D discussed how women could undermine their own power by being overly feminine, or little girl-ish, yet Administrator B also noted that when women do feel powerless, they frequently resort to "womanly tactics" because they have no other alternative.

Administrator E also noted that women give up their power if they lose the intense commitment they had to the priorities and goals that they had supported before.

Administrator C was the only interviewee that mentioned knowledge as power, and indicated that a lack of knowledge is a lack of power.

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Frankl's Man's Search for Meaning, which gave me an entirely different lesson. The biggest part of her school's study had included The Diary of Anne Frank, which for a lot of readers contains a cosmically different theme than the abuse of power.



Not Defining One's Circumstances as Defeat

All the administrators, either implicitly or explicitly, exhibited a positive attitude about their lives and their careers which would lead them to not define their circumstances as defeating. While Administrator D was the chief proponent of this theory, since she spoke of it directly and explicitly, it pervaded all the remarks of Administrator C, who emphasized her positive attitude as contributing to her perpetual lack of stress. She called herself "the life of the party," and noted that that was her reputation among her friends.

All the administrators, however, in the stories they related about their own lives and careers, demonstrated this quality: Administrator A when she "took up the reins" of her family's support; Administrator B when she decided she "had a contribution to make" and "was not going to be a nobody"; Administrator D when she made a "sidestep" in her career; Administrator E when she went around to all the male committee members to avoid being deadlocked; and Administrator C when she decided to collect information through a subordinate so that she would not be without knowledge about telecommunications.

This quality is clearly and intrinsically related to the qualities of creativity and adaptability. All the qualities I have summarized here from my reflections and from

their representations in the interviews are related to one another, since they all, in my view, relate to power.

Additional Areas of Discussion from the Interviews

Because some of the questions posed by the interviewer related to women as well as to power, some of the emerging themes related to women as well. The interviewees all seemed to be very happy being women. Administrator B said she would not have wanted to be anything else.

Administrator A spoke of the contribution to the human race that it allowed her to make. Administrator D spoke of the warmth it allowed her to communicate, which she enjoyed. Administrators C, E, and A all spoke of the rewards they had received by being wives and mothers.

In spite of their acknowledged pleasure in being women, all of the interviewees seemed to think of themselves as human beings, or as people, before they thought of themselves as women, and Administrator D spent a considerable time discussing how she felt that this frame of reference had been an advantage to her in her advancement in the professional world. This was clearly implied in the discussion of Administrator B when she noted that we got nowhere by making our male colleagues angry with us by blaming our plight on them. Administrator A, too, spoke of the importance of not making the men mad, because too many of them were in a position to stop us. So the frame of reference of women as people first and as women second may be, in the words of Administrator D, "very useful."

A predominant theme that emerged from the women on their own without prodding from me, or without even a specific question directed toward it, was the consideration of the child-bearing and childrearing roles of women. Several of the women, notably Administrator E, remarked about it as a real source of power.

Well, there may be some things in our society once again--some rules that we have socialized women into that really do in a sense represent some kind of power. Women do have, as I said, the closest interaction with their children and they can influence to a great deal how their children will think, or what their senses of values will be. [That's the next generation.] Yes, probably and several generations there following, so yeah, that's a kind of power, and I think that many women take advantage of that. When you get out into the professional world or into the corporate world, the kinds of power there are generally not the kind that women will have. It just really isn't, because we look for in our leaders folk who are hard, who are sometimes grossly unfair, knocking things over and getting things done. That's not what we look for and that's not the role that women are socialized into being very active in.

Another theme that emerged from the interviews was the idea of empowering others, which was mentioned in all the interviews. Administrator D talked about its being a way that one left something of oneself behind, sort of like the immortality parents get from passing qualities to their children. Administrator E talked about empowering her subordinates by ensuring project success, and also by delegating authority for various tasks. Administrator A talked about empowering others by having a collaborative administrative style, and Administrator D echoed this same theme.

### Analysis of Themes Against Literature Background

The category of subjects for this study was serving above the level of Dean in a 4-year institution in a geographic region comprising almost a million residents. There were 12 eligible institutions. The number of eligible women from these schools indicates that the problems outlined in the first research section of the conceptual framework section, sexism as a worldview, are informally statistically supported. There were only six institutions within that group that had women represented at that level, with only a total of seven, possibly eight, women altogether.\* The two women in the group who held the top rank at their institutions were unable to schedule an interview with me during the 4 months I attempted to schedule them, so the study proceeded without them. Finally, it included all of the women who held positions above the level of Dean but below the level of president at the 12 chosen institutions, and there were five such women. This corroborates the research showing that institutions of higher learning have an average of fewer than 1% of their senior administrative positions held by females.

The unconscious comments made by the interviewees in this study that reflected a deference to men support the views of Wehr (1987) and others that androcentrism and sexism

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\*There was some disagreement about one of the women's rank from her institution's representatives, and since she would have been the third woman from the same institution, she was not included.

pervade our society to the extent that we do not even recognize them any more. My guess is that all of these women had raised their consciousness to the degree that they were not unconsciously choosing to be inferior to men, as Tibbetts (1975, 1977) suggested, but the fact that they made comments such as "It's a man's world," "Of course, the President is a man," and "All the senior administrators here are men" reflects their acknowledgment of the extent to which androcentrism has pervaded our society. It is possible, however, that at some level even these powerful women believe that the positions of power should be held by men, as such discussions as that of Administrator B about the "tapes" would indicate. Of course, if you asked them directly, their conscious mind would probably deny it; a "Freudian"-type slip of the kind indicated by the above comments, however, might indicate a belief held at a more submerged level. Administrator B's comment about women's having been "second-class for so long" is a telling one. It may not be possible to "be" second-class for so long without starting to FEEL second-class.

The literature speaks of a so-called "fear of success" of women (Horner, 1968). The women in this study did not directly demonstrate a "fear of success," but the fact that three of the five administrators had not applied for any promotions, and one of them had in fact never even applied for a job, is significant. Greater ambition is probably demonstrated in the other two, Administrators D

and E, although they both seemed to value success as only secondary to other experiences that they valued more highly, like making a contribution, achieving a goal, or solving a complex problem.

The quality of interdependence mentioned by McClelland (1965) as being particularly female was exhibited in this study in

1. the collaborative administrative style indicated by Administrator A;
2. the collegiality desired by Administrator D with her faculty;
3. the "circular" nature of power indicated by Administrator E--that power is granted vertically in both directions;
4. the definition of power by Administrator E--motivating other people to do what you want them to do.

McClelland (1965) notes that when he speaks of interdependence, he is speaking not only of human interdependence, but of a complex interdependence with the world. Administrator D echoed that analysis when she discussed her need to develop complex relationships, not only among people but among ideas too. Her comments in relation to this need are almost word-for-word in McClelland's terms. Men are more interested in the simple and the direct, both McClelland and Administrator D have found. Administrator D (and women in general,

according to McClelland) are more interested in the complex, the undefined.

The receptivity noted by Gilligan (1982), Jung (1957), and others as being particularly feminine surfaced in a number of ways among my interviewees. In a way, the acceptance of Administrators A, B, and C of their promotions as offered by their institutions rather than their deliberate seeking of advancement by moving to other institutions could be interpreted as a kind of passive receptivity. Administrators D and E, though, as has already been noted, demonstrated a much more proactive relationship with their careers, applying for and getting promoted through active solicitation of advancement.

A pervasive quality of the interviewees was the total lack of blame of men for the "predicament" of women. Nowhere in any of the interviews did women blame men for their lack of power, their slower rise to power than a male counterpart would have had, or the like. Administrator E commented that the percentages were "bleak," but did not place blame for that on the men in the power structure. Administrator B directly noted that it would have been counterproductive and wrong to hate or blame the men with whom we have to work. While Administrator C noted that "It's a man's world," she expressed appreciation to the men in her life, both personally and professionally, as did Administrator E. Administrator D was very generous in giving credit to her father

as a role model, and qualified almost all of her statements about women by saying that there were also men like that, as did Administrator B.

This kind of generous deference to men, even as they are being asked to expound upon women's issues, is typical of women. As Ashley Montagu noted in his classic work The Natural Superiority of Women, women will be quick to object to his title because they are generous in seeing the worth in both sexes.\*

Further, as Schaeff (1985) has indicated, fairness is an important value to women. Because of this, they must believe that the system within which they are operating is fair, so they state that it is fair partly in order to make it so.

The women in my study were all very feminine. Bem's concept of androgyny was not tested in my study, but there was no exhibited quality of androgyny in any of the women I studied. It might be noted, however, that the two single women in my study, Administrators B and D, did dress and act in ways that were deliberately designed to be attractive to both men and women, and both were direct about stating that. Administrator D noted that her feminine warmth and touching was a quality that particularly enabled her to get along with women, and she noted specific ways of dressing that she had chosen purposefully to be non-threatening to men. Administrator B was also aware of her dress, noting

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\*And also, I might note rather sadly, because as both Tibbetts and Administrator B have noted, they are accustomed to being "second class."



that she tried to be very non-frilly and traditional, as a different way of not offending men.

Gilligan (1982) has noted that there is an absolute ethic of care in women's development. This is exhibited by the many comments in these interviews in reference to caring. Gilligan goes on to say that this absolute ethic is complicated for women in our culture by a need for personal integrity, which is also demonstrated vividly and overwhelmingly in these interviews by the emphasis over and over on integrity, principles, values, and goodness. The recognition of the need for personal integrity gives rise to the competing concept of rights, which changes the absolute of care. This creates almost a dilemma, as we can see exhibited in the courageous career decision made by Administrator D. Even after she had made a decision based on care, based on non-violence, which is a female ethic, she was still morally troubled because she had not been able to simultaneously uphold the ethic of academic integrity as she saw it. According to Gilligan, the challenge of multiple truths and conflicting values is met by women's defining a new ethic of generosity and care, which meets the demands of the care ethic as well as the rights ethic.

Gilligan notes that women define themselves in the context of connections and relationships. The women in this study demonstrated that unequivocally from the extremes of Administrator B saying that after a couple of broken romances

she decided she wasn't going to be a "nobody," and Administrator A giving credit for almost her entire career to her husband's failed health, to routine remarks such as Administrator C's comment that she had a lot of support from her husband and her children, and Administrator D's noting that she enjoyed very much being feminine in the context of a male-female relationship. Gilligan notes that self-descriptions of successful women mention relationships such as mother, wife, child, lover, and the women in this study were no exception. Gilligan also notes that successful women measure themselves in the activity of their attachments-- "giving to," "helping out," "being kind," "not hurting," etc., and the women in this study were no exception here either. Two administrators, A and D, mentioned specifically a strong need for service--to "give back" to the community for all that they had received. The values of being kind and not hurting were consistently present through all the interviews, from Administrator A's grieving over the subordinate she had had to fire to Administrator D's not wanting the students who had demonstrated to be prosecuted, to Administrator C's wanting her subordinates to be recognized for their janitorial and maintenance work. According to Gilligan, this care ethic represents a dilemma of constant compromise for women, whose whole development is a conflict between the certainty of beliefs (represented by integrity) and the complication of attachments (represented by care).

A type of consciousness, a sensitivity to humanity, that you can affect someone else's life . . . and you have a responsibility not to endanger other people's lives or to hurt other people. So morality is complex. . . . Morality involves realizing that there is an interplay between self and other and that you are going to have to take responsibility for both of them. (Gilligan, 1982, p. 139)

Over and over in all the interviews the word responsibility came up. Administrator A talked about having a responsibility to future generations of students. Administrator B talked about how the planning and administrative decisions she was making would impact the campus for generations after she left. Administrator D spoke of having a responsibility to the entire academic community in terms of the example she was setting. She also spoke of the specific responsibility she felt to ensure that no violence occurred while she was in charge.\*

One of the responsibilities that surfaced repeatedly was the responsibility to repay--to fulfill an obligation. According to Gilligan, morality is tied to an awareness of power with an accompanying dilemma. In the words of Gilligan, again:

The moral ideal is not cooperation or interdependence but rather the fulfillment of an obligation, the repayment of a debt, by giving to others without taking anything for oneself. (1982, p. 139)

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\*Gilligan says that male and female judgments are made from different ethics. The male judgments are made from the premise of justice--that everyone should be treated the same. The female judgments are made from the premise of nonviolence--that no one should be hurt.

The women in this study corroborated to some degree Barnett's definition of personal power,\* even though Barnett's population was low-income single mothers. The desired control over self was still present in this study, in such comments as Administrator B's emphasis that she likes to control her own investments, to Administrator D's confidence that she will make it, "if not here, then somewhere else," whenever she decides that she is ready, to Administrator E's confidence in her planning ability and her knowledge of the "DUM--Data Utilization Matrix."

An OED\*\* definition that is most significant to this study in light of the literature is the twofold definition supported by a quotation from John Locke--active and passive power: able to make or able to receive any change. The women in this study demonstrated a particular strength in being able to receive as well as effect changes. They demonstrated both active and passive power, although they gave more credence from the definitions they provided themselves to the active half of the definition, consistent with the expectations of our culture.

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\*"Faith in one's ability to determine the course of one's own life; awareness of one's capabilities and talents; economic self-sufficiency; self-respect and expectation of respect from others; lessened dependence on external affirmation; and emotional resiliency."

\*\*Oxford English Dictionary.

The second definition provided by the OED, "ability to act or affect something strongly . . . force of character . . ." is also consistent with the emphasis on influence in the definitions provided by the women in this study. The fourth definition in the OED also included influence as a major part of its explanation.

The 17th definition provided by the OED, "Capable, competent, ability," is also very consistent with the information given by the women in this study in their discussions. Other parts of the definitions in the OED are less useful for the impressions women have of power, according to the data gathered in this study and the meanings of those data that have emerged in this researcher's analysis of the themes.

The five levels of power listed by Rollo May (1972) have limited applicability to the power demonstrated and explained by the women in this study. The first, the power to be; the second, self-affirmation; and the third, self-assertion, seem to be taken for granted in large part by the interviewees in this study; and the fourth and fifth, aggression and violence, seem non-applicable. In fact, there would seem to be a definite ethic against aggression and violence, consistent with Gilligan's notion that female judgments are based on an ethic of nonviolence. Note particularly Administrator D's stated stand that violence must not occur in her situation with students who were demonstrating.

Administrator B, too, noted that the students in the 60's who demonstrated and marched were just "able students." The operating principle from both Administrators B and D was mercy, not justice or punishment.

Even the second and third levels of power seem in a way inapplicable, although in another way, as I have already indicated, the subjects of this study took self-affirmation and self-assertion for granted. The way in which they took these qualities for granted, however, is not the way in which these qualities traditionally relate to power. The subjects of this study affirmed themselves and asserted themselves in the same way that they controlled themselves. They had the attitude of controlling, affirming, and asserting themselves as an indication of personal independence and autonomy, not in reference to other people at all.

The kinds of power indicated by the women in this study seemed to include the power to influence others through persuasion and motivation, which is more collaborative than is self-assertion. A more appropriate attempt at the levels of power for women might be the following list:

1. the power to be
2. the power to control oneself, one's attitudes, one's experiences while still not hurting others
3. the power to maintain one's values in the face of obstacles and hardship while still caring for others

4. the power to influence others with integrity while still being generous
5. the power to affect the future of systems in positive ways

The delicate balance in this list that I have suggested of self-control and autonomy and care and generosity and influence of others reflects to some extent the dilemma women face, as I see it, as they attempt to move into the power arena while still upholding the elements of the culture of which they have been given, and have taken, charge: the element of the good, the integrity, the mercy, the care. These are and must be still included. They cannot be ignored, even as women begin to take on responsibilities in new areas.

This list that I have suggested modestly attempts to capture the essence of what my interviewees have suggested power is to them as well as what the literature suggests is true of women in general and of power in general. It is important to note the juxtaposition of power and care, because it is clear that care is an essential element of social interaction for women, and since power becomes increasingly a social interaction as it progresses forward in the levels, care will be essential to maintain. I have included Gilligan's solution to the dilemma of care and rights, generosity, because I believe it is accurate. And I have included the emphasis Gilligan and my interviewees placed on integrity or principles. At the highest level,

I have included influence not only on other people but on the future and on systems such as "the academic community," noted fervently by Administrator D.

For women, helping others is clearly a part of power. It is powerful to be able to help others, and not in the sense mentioned by McClelland (1975), so that one is helping others in order to make the one receiving help appear less powerful, because that violates the care and integrity ethics emphasized by my interviewees. Helping others is powerful behavior because it indicates that one is ABLE to do so, and that one has progressed far enough in one's own levels to be able to give to others rather than just working on one's own needs. Also, as three of my subjects mentioned, it is a repayment of a debt. One exhibits one's power by giving without having to have anything returned, just as one demonstrates one's generosity by giving gifts, not by making loans.



## CHAPTER VI

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*"A man, when he undertakes a journey, has, in general, the end in view; a woman thinks more of the incidental occurrences, the strange things that may possibly occur on the road. . . ." (Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 1792, p. 60).*

Introduction

The word "power" has been widely used to describe many experiences and conditions. Because of the violence and graft with which power has come to be associated, though, many have come to mistrust power. The traditional male paradigm of power has been one of action, if not aggression, and yet there have always been powerful women who did not fit the male paradigm. The subject of female power has recently become a wide research interest.

Power is inextricably knotted into the fabric of leadership. Women have available to them many kinds of power, and are increasingly moving into organizational arenas where power is a necessary operating tool. As women move into a world that has been dominated historically by men, they have the opportunity to alter roles and definitions that have been established and unquestioned. One organizational arena in which this drama is unfolding is academe, where women have quietly served in some powerful positions, although their percentage of representation has been small.

This researcher examined the power perceptions of selected women in higher educational administration, to determine the nature of the experience of power to women who are in a position to have it and to use it. Because of the generally held cultural bias that power is somehow a masculine characteristic, this close examination of female power perception is significant. Because women may not fit the standard for male power, it was necessary to analyze these perceptions separately from the male paradigm. Hence a qualitative format with semi-structured interview questions was designed. The assumptions were that

1. Power is an integral part of a leadership position.
2. Women in leadership positions regularly have the opportunity to exercise power.
3. The experience of power can be studied through structured and analyzed conversations.

"Power" was specifically not defined in this study, to allow for the meaning of the word to emerge from the women selected for the study. To maintain the appropriate interpretive inquiry framework, the study was bounded by the researcher's personal reflections in addition to relevant contributions from the printed literature, which together formed the conceptual framework for the study.

The women selected for this study held positions higher than Dean at institutions offering the baccalaureate degree.

The research method chosen included a deeply engaged interaction with the subjects through semi-structured conversations following a flexible plan to permit the selected women to contribute to the emerging data. The researcher's main objective was to understand the perceptions of these women, all of whose experiences of power have been unique. From these unique reports, the researcher then attempted to extrapolate common themes and analyze those emerging themes against the background of the established conceptual framework.

#### Summary

The printed research that contributed to this study came from four areas:

1. Cultural views of men and women
2. Women's ways of perceiving things
3. Women's use of language
4. Power

#### Cultural Views of Men and Women

The way that society views men and women in our culture has a powerful impact on our cultural views about what activities are appropriate for women, and creates a lens through which these activities are viewed. The existing androcentric worldview has made it difficult for women to rise to positions of power recognized by society, and women themselves have often chosen not to rise to such positions because of

their own ambivalence about challenging the prevailing worldview (Wehr, 1987).

Men and women differ significantly in dozens of ways, but men and women each have a masculine and a feminine side. The established and ancient stereotypes of men as active and women as receptive trace at least back to Jung, although recent scholarship has criticized these stereotypes as contributing to a subtly sexist worldview (Whitmont, 1982). Some of the differences between men and women that were critical for this study are that men are more assertive, competitive and independent, women more interdependent and cooperative (Lifton, 1965).

Women have power and achievement drives similar to men's (Harlan & Weiss, 1981), although there are few women in senior positions of higher education administration. The accommodative female leadership style has been seen as less appropriate for leadership positions than the more assertive male style (Napierkowski, 1983). A person in a leadership position has regular opportunities to use interpersonal power (Hersey & Blanchard, 1980; Kanter, 1977). Because leadership is viewed as an area where women are ill-trained and perhaps even ill-suited, however, our culturally held view of appropriate leader behavior is typically male, assertive behavior (Sandler, 1986; Sarantos, 1988).

Overall, there is no clear picture of leadership as it relates to women (Napierkowski, 1983). The literature

specifically addressing the issues of women and leadership within our culture has been sparse (Deaux, 1985). Organizationally, for women in leadership positions, there have been few role models (Belenky et al., 1986; Carlson, 1983). Women in leadership positions are also very isolated, having few female colleagues (Sandler, 1986). Although women have aspired to power and leadership, they have statistically been denied equal participation in senior administrative roles in higher education administration (Sarantos, 1988). The ones who have achieved the ranks of senior administration have frequently faced obstacles of having their womanhood questioned and having their power challenged or denied (Adams, 1979).

#### Women's Ways of Perceiving Things

Women tend to typically display a caring and connectedness in their thinking that predisposes them to being intuitive and nonjudgmental (Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982). Partly because of their values and beliefs, women do not perceive things the same way men do (Horney, 1967). Women are not simply the opposite of men. To think that they are simply measures them on male terms which may not apply (McClelland, 1965). This leaves women in the precarious position of having no way to validate their own experience within the prevailing system (Spender, 1984). With no legitimate outlet for their power, women may be consumed with destructive rage,

which becomes equated at some level with the power drive, exacerbating the discomfort women already feel with the use of their power (Schaefer, 1985).

The caring and attachment associated with women's ways of perceiving things can provide a legitimate route for the development of female power (Miller, 1986). Generosity and nonviolence characterize important qualities in the motivation and values of women that must be included in day-to-day contexts. Gilligan (1982) notes that women make judgments from an ethic of nonviolence, not an ethic of justice as men do. The connectedness essential for women is so real that women must actually progress to the stage where they can consider themselves as equal claimants for their own responsibility and generosity (Belenky et al., 1986).

Women have a contextual mode of judgment, which may cause them to go slowly when taking control or making judgments (Gilligan, 1982). Because of their natural commitment to the feeling processes, women have been labeled as deficient in the thinking processes (Belenky et al., 1986). According to Jung, feeling is the process of valuing and is the primary function of women (Wehr, 1987). Women have traditionally been the keepers of the moral integrity of a culture (Degler, 1980). Because of their many commitments, and the various roles assigned to them by their culture, many women have had lower aspirations than their men just in order to cope with

the sheer diversity of their tasks (McClelland, 1965). Some women have tried to do it all and have fallen prey to the stresses of the Superwoman Syndrome (Shaevitz, 1984).

### Language of Women

The androcentrism pervasive in the culture has had an interactive effect on the language we use (Wehr, 1987). If the definition of women accepted by society does not include power as part of the definition, the definition begins to function as a self-fulfilling prophecy (Pearson, 1985). Our experience is formed by our social, cultural, and linguistic matrix (Shapiro, 1983). Women risk exclusion if they challenge this existing structure, so their subordination is set through and by patriarchal language (Wehr, 1987). This language reflects men's definitions of the world from their positions of power and dominance, and for women these positions are false (Spender, 1980).

Women are researching their language use (Pfeiffer, 1985). Some of the aspects that have been labeled "nonpowerful" have been taglines, qualifiers, vulnerability to interruptions, deference, lack of success with conversation-start attempts, tentative suggestions, compliance, hedges, disclaimers, compound requests, tag questions, and verbal fillers (Lakoff, 1977; Pfeiffer, 1985). All of these elements are interpreted as demonstrating male dominance in our society (Pearson, 1985). It would clearly be possible to interpret

the female style of communication as non-powerful by the male norm, but it is not clear whether these communication patterns have any connection at all to the power of the speaker or to the speaker's perception of her power.

### Power

Power has been defined as something that is available to everyone in the form of interpersonal influence (May, 1972). Although power as influence may be acted out within the organization, it is less organizational than it is personal (Bacharach & Lawler, 1980). Another avenue through which power is available to everyone is through competence (Kanter, 1977, 1979). Much power research has been centered around this key attribute of power as it is acted out organizationally, but yet this attribute denotes a personal quality to power (Carlson, 1983). Most researchers agree on an interpersonal element necessary to their definitions of power (May, 1972).

Many women have feared or denied their personal power (Horney, 1967). Rollo May (1972) warns that denying power sets up a contradiction that leads us away from the responsibility that ought to accompany it. May lists five levels of power:

1. power to be
2. self-affirmation
3. self-assertion



4. aggression

5. violence

Only the first of these five levels has been clearly always available to women. Men and women both have traditionally thought of men as more powerful than women (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). The male paradigm of power progressing to violence in its extreme or subverted form has been culturally supported, too (Chesler, 1972). Women have usually turned inward into self-destructiveness and depression.

Issues of power have maintained a remarkably low profile in sex and gender studies (Deaux, 1985). Women's power styles and experience of power might be quite different from men's (McClelland, 1975). The difference of action-oriented power for women versus inner-strength and resource-for-others power for women appears repeatedly (Sojacy, 1985). The view that power is something that only leaders have is part of the deeply ingrained dominant white male culture, and since white males have statistically been the leaders, power has been measured only in terms that were appropriate to these individuals who had it.

Female qualities such as nurturing and caring have been viewed as less powerful than the activities within the male paradigm of power, if not as altogether powerless or even subservient (McClelland, 1972). Rollo May (1972) has noted two higher level types of power, nutrient and integrative,

however, that are more "female" in their orientation. He even suggests that these kinds of power are forms of love.

Some research indicates that men and women have similar drives for power and even similar perceptions of power (Harlan & Weiss, 1981; Nuwanyakpa, 1984). Other research, however, indicates that women perceive power in terms of interpersonal relationships, and in terms of its natural connectedness to other aspects of their lives (Carlson, 1983; Napierkowski, 1983; Sagaria, 1980). A woman's view of power is wholistic and may include qualities that are viewed as non-powerful by a man, such as responding, forbearing, and empowering others (Belenky et al., 1986; Luke, 1980; Mayo-Chamberlain, 1980). There is a subtly mystical quality to a woman's power mentioned by some of the research (Gilligan, 1982; Horney, 1967; Sojacy, 1985; Whitmont, 1982). At some level women seem aware that they have a wellspring of personal power. They may be hesitant to use it because of a commitment to not hurting others and a fear that their use of power will hurt others (Belenky et al., 1986; Miller, 1976).

The elements of standard power definitions that are more appropriate for women are:

1. making or receiving changes (OED)
2. mental strength or force of character (OED)
3. influence (OED)
4. being a resource (McClelland, 1965)
5. autonomy (Winter, 1973)

Some elements that seem less appropriate are:

1. aggression/violence (May, 1972)
2. physical strength (McClelland, 1965)
3. control and ascendancy over others (Winter, 1973)

### Reflections

My own perception of power has been developed through years of having no organizational but much personal power. I learned first about the kind of personal strength that brings power with it from my mother, my grandmother, and a friend and mentor. These women had survivalist-type strength as well as the ability to set and reach goals and the ability to get others to support these goals. They also used their power to support and empower the ones they loved, and exhibited great creativity and lateral thinking. These women were not radical feminists, although within their own small spheres they accepted nothing less than equality for themselves. They accepted the reality of the constraints that worked against them and used their power in order to assist other people. I learned from these women that the power of love is stronger than the power of control. From my friend and mentor I learned specifically the importance of not giving one's power away by failing to make a decision necessary to be made.

My adult years empowered me by teaching me the tough lessons of bitter experience. From the best training, I

learned the lesson of the power of receptivity and reaffirmed my knowledge of the power of commitment. From being the victim of several crimes, I learned the power of active responses and the reality of my physical vulnerability. From my own self-improvement and awareness programs I reaffirmed my knowledge of the power of integrity.

In my own reflections about power, there were several important qualities that had significance for me as a researcher:

1. The connection of power with an intense commitment
2. The connection of power with love
3. The necessity of action
4. The connection with adaptability
5. The ability to get others to align with one in meeting one's goals
6. The necessity of accepting one's circumstances
7. The connection of power with lateral thinking
8. The action of empowering others
9. The necessity of operating out of integrity
10. The potential of giving one's power away
11. The determination to not define one's circumstances as defeat.

### Methodology

It was the purpose of this study to consider the human issue of power, its relationship to some women who have it, and their perceptions of what power is. The method chosen

for this study was interpretive inquiry. The study was bounded on all sides by the researcher's reflections and interpretations. "Facts" and "data" were interpreted as being inherently value-laden and dynamic--changing and being changed by the researcher, the subjects, and the literature. Meanings in interpretive inquiry emerge, consistent with the researcher's greater emphasis on process rather than product (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). In qualitative research, key words are "understanding" and "meaning" (Shapiro, 1988).

A widely used qualitative technique is the semi-structured personal interview, which was employed in this study. In this interview the discussion is guided by the interviewer but controlled by the respondent within the limits of the topics provided by the open-ended questions (see Appendix A). The semi-structured interview is appropriate for female conversational style, and is appropriate for maintaining the power of the interviewee during the interview (Oakley, 1988). It is also appropriate for allowing the establishment of a relationship between interviewer and respondent (Burgess, 1984).

The five women chosen to participate in this study all had top- or second-level positions in respected colleges or universities. The assumption was made that these women had power, and the purpose was to determine what the nature and experience of power is to these women.

The guiding interview questions fell into three categories: What it is like to be woman, what it is like to be an administrator, and what it is like to use power. All the interviews were for at least an hour, in person, in the offices of the respondents. The attempt was made to keep the interviewees in their power roles during the interview.

The interviews were tape recorded, transcribed, and coded as to emerging themes. The interviews were explicated according to the categories and questions developed in the conceptual framework. The research conclusions flowed from these data as well as from the review of relevant literature and the researcher's own reflections.

Because we are limited to the same language used by the culture we wish to suspend, we are limited in our ability to approach this study with an empty slate. We can only make an attempt to understand meaning by collecting a rich and full group of data, reporting these data naturally, and subjecting them to scrutiny, knowing that the meaning we make may not be the same as the meaning another researcher or reader would make, and knowing we cannot claim to have reached the "truth," or to have made any basis for prediction of the future. The claims made for the conclusions are modest, but the study does permit a contribution to the understanding of the subject matter. The methodology chosen was clearly appropriate for this study of the nature and experience of power to women who are in a position to have it and to use it.

### Themes

The data emerging from the interviews were examined against the conceptual framework developed from the literature background and the author's personal reflections. There were several critical themes that emerged from this comparison.

One strongly emerging theme was that of fear or denial of power. For Administrator A, "power" had consistently negative connotations. Another important emerging theme was the theme of power as influence. For all these women, influence seemed to be an integral part of what they saw as power. All the women saw influence as an appropriate way to use power.

Another emerging theme was the theme of power as control. Although this seemed to be the part of power with which most of the interviewees were most uncomfortable, and indeed was the part of power they tended to deny, particularly when it involved controlling other people, they all still acknowledged it as part of power. Control over their own lives gave them a sense of power.

All the women in this study made a connection between power and values, an idea that power must be used for "the good." Since, as the literature suggests, women have been society's keepers of moral values, this is not surprising.

Almost all interviewees were very definite that, with the exception of childbearing, there was not a certain role

appropriate for a woman. Even so, they all gave attention to the traditional role of childrearing.

The women in this study spoke of both male and female role models, and they also emphasized the importance of their being a role model for other women. Almost all the interviewees noted that the political climate is changing for women and that they were aware of themselves as change agents.

Another emerging theme was the necessity of credentials. The administrators also mentioned the authority that was granted them by their institution being an important source of their power.

The theme of giving one's power away or becoming powerless was also developed by the interviewees. One way this can occur is by alienating powerful men. Another way was by abdicating when decisions are necessary. Another was by being pseudo-feminine, and another was by simply defining one's circumstances as defeated or powerless. Another way of giving one's power away noted was by not having information, and another was by failing to plan. A final way mentioned was by losing the intense commitment to the goals or the organization.

Other themes mentioned by the women were their involvement with conflict resolution and peacemaking; interacting with important people as a way of feeling powerful; getting things done, especially by their subordinates, as a way of



feeling powerful; being a survivor; enjoying the process of making sense out of ambiguity; having a sense that power is bi-directional; and using woman's intuition.

The kinds of power indicated by the women in this study seemed to include the power to influence others through persuasion and motivation, which is more collaborative than is self-assertion. A more appropriate attempt at the levels of power for women is the following list:

1. the power to be
2. the power to control oneself, one's attitudes, one's experiences while still not hurting others
3. the power to maintain one's values in the face of obstacles and hardships while still caring for others
4. the power to influence others with integrity while still being generous
5. the power to affect the future of systems in positive ways

### Conclusions

In the words of David Purpel, "In the best of all possible worlds, we should have no need to draw conclusions." Unfortunately, as so many of the assumptions of this paper, so much of the printed research, and so many of the stated findings reflect, this is not the best of all possible worlds. Happily, it is also not the worst, as the same above indicated evidence also reflects. The purpose of this

section of this study is to further consider the findings of this study, with the objective of providing conclusions and making recommendations for further research.

The kind of research methodology chosen to examine women's perceptions and experiences of their own power was a phenomenological one, descended directly and appropriately from the French feminists. Although I have surely been influenced by the positivist model I learned as an undergraduate and graduate student, I have attempted to not impose any order or form on the data that did not emerge naturally during the study, and I have attempted to let the emerging data influence not only the conclusions that surfaced but also the structure of the study itself, in adherence to the interpretive inquiry method of research.

It is clear that the data I have gathered are ambiguous, and I invite other researchers to develop alternative meanings that I may have missed. I have tried to be honest and open in developing my own reflective background as it influenced my conceptual framework, but I am aware that, as Joe Luft and Harry Ingham exemplify in their "Johari Window," it is not possible for an individual to tell or even know the "Truth" about themselves. In fact, there may be no such thing as the "Truth" about an individual, and in truth, there may be no such thing as a "fact" about an individual; or in truth and in fact, there may be no Truths or Facts at all. Our goal, though, has been to try to make

a sense of it, and to try to choose the course that seemed at the time to make the most sense.

Thus, the claims made for generalization here are modest. It would not be correct, however, to suggest that little could be concluded from this research. The three guiding questions from the interview led to the development of statements that can be suggested in regard to what it is like to be a woman and what the experience of power is like for a woman who is in a position to have it and to use it, particularly in the field of educational administration.

The women in this study enjoyed their womanhood and saw it as providing them with varied opportunities to influence others, themselves, and systems such as the academic community. Within the limitations stated before in regard to having integrity and being responsible, it could be said that these women enjoyed their power, within the context of their positions as educational administrators, enjoyed using it to reach goals that they were intensely committed to, and enjoyed using their power to motivate and empower other people.

The closest synonym for power for the women in this study was influence, which is consistent with the research that indicates a strong need in women for connections and relationships (Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1986). For these women, power as control (of others) was seen as a negative. The women in this study tended to deny

their power, although they did not tend to fear it. All the women in this study were comfortable experiencing power as influence, and they all saw influence as an appropriate way to use power. The women in this study tended to use collaborative, participatory, or collegial styles of leadership. The experience of power for these women also included control of their own lives and decisions.

The nature and experience of power for the women in this study included a major component of responsibility. All the women in this study mentioned values, principles, integrity, or morals as being qualities they associated with the responsible use of power. The women in this study felt a responsibility to their institutions, their subordinates, larger systems such as the academic community, and to future individuals who would be affected by decisions that they made.

These qualities of the nature and experience of power to the women selected for this study have led the researcher to propose the following paradigm as suggested levels appropriate to define the power of women:

1. the power to be;
2. the power to control oneself, one's attitudes, one's experiences while still not hurting others;
3. the power to maintain one's values in the face of obstacles and hardships while still caring for others;
4. the power to influence others with integrity while still being generous;

5. the power to affect the future of systems in positive ways.

This proposed paradigm more closely matches the women's experience of power as expressed by the subjects of this study than does the model\* suggested by Rollo May in 1972 (see Chapter II), only the first of which has always seemed clearly appropriate for women. This paradigm also includes the complex women's needs analysis developed by Gilligan in 1982 and considers the types of power categorized by May in 1972\*\* (see Chapter II), only the last two of which seem to characterize the nature of power as examined in this study. In regard to the questions posed at the beginning of this study, then, the researcher would suggest there does seem to be a particular experience of power to a woman who is in a position to have it and to use it, and that the power experience tends to manifest itself in traditionally feminine ways of moral concern, human caring, and connectedness. The proposed paradigm suggests the complexity and necessity of using power responsibly for the women in this study.

The women in this study tended to use fairly typical feminine leadership, corroborating the model proposed by Loden (1985), Feminine Leadership Model:

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\*power to be, self-affirmation, self-assertion, aggression, and violence.

- \*\*1. exploitative
2. manipulative
3. competitive
4. nutrient
5. integrative

Operating Style: Cooperative

Organizational Structure: Team

Basic Objective: Quality Output

Problem-Solving Style: Intuitive/Rational

Key Characteristics: Lower Control, Emphatic, Collaborative, High Performance Standards. (1985)

### Recommendations

Further research into this area should include most obviously a set of women who are not routinely in a position to have power and to use it. Examples of such groups that I would choose for further research would be women in prison, AFDC recipients, or battered women.

Additionally, further groups of powerful women should be chosen to see how they differ from the academic community. Groups that I would choose for further research would be professional women such as lawyers, political women such as senators and congresswomen, women with nontraditional power such as police officers, women with power in the corporate sector such as executives.

Further, groups of women with historically traditional female roles should be examined. Groups that I would consider for research would be homemakers, nurses, secretaries, and classroom teachers.

Also, since the subject of childbearing and childrearing surfaced as an area of power for women, and since this

is replicated in the literature, it would be useful to consider women in these stages of life. I would suggest groups of pregnant women, nursing mothers, or traditional homemakers.

Finally, an additional group that would offer merit for further research would be men. It would offer useful comparison to consider both powerful and nonpowerful men, both from traditional and nontraditional roles. Since the subject of men as contributing to the homemaking and child-rearing functions surfaced, it would be useful to examine the power perceptions of a group of these men.

Additionally, study by other researchers could investigate other important related concepts such as success and integrity.

Lastly and perhaps most significantly, future research should address the issue of how the proposed paradigm affects leadership models. What are the implications for leadership theory if women's power seems to be different from men's power? Future research should also address the issue of how this power model would affect subordinates and the organization.

#### Epilogue

There were certainly surprises in this research. The first and probably the biggest surprise was the fervency with which Administrator A denied having any power. It did not surprise me that the other interviewees all briefly denied it: modesty would sometimes call for that in our

culture. Too, their denials were all accompanied by other admissions of power.

Another surprise was the emphasis given to home and family roles by the interviewees since I had had no questions directed to those areas. Sometimes I directed follow-up questions to those areas if the interviewees brought up the subjects.

I was also surprised that the subject of information or knowledge as power did not surface more prominently. The overwhelming definition of power for these women was influence, which was not really a surprise. It may be that the fact that men are stereotypically more oriented toward data and tasks and women more oriented toward people and relationships is helpful in understanding why there was more of an emphasis on influence (a people-related function) than on information. This is not to say that there was not a task emphasis, however. All of the interviewees noted the importance of getting the job done, and getting it done well. They usually emphasized in this context the importance of motivating others to do it, which is another form of influence.

From my own perspective, it was inconsistent with my previously developed paradigm that so many of the administrators should mention control as a synonym for power. It seemed inconsistent with my own reflections as well as with my readings that women would think of control (of



others) as a synonym for their own power, and in fact they did not name control (of others) as a synonym for their own power. They named control (of others) as a synonym for power in an abstract sense, and then almost immediately rejected it as an acceptable way for them to use their own power. They did indicate that control of their own circumstances was part of their definition of power, which is a different kind of control altogether. And since women have only recently historically been allowed control of their own circumstances (finances, decisions, etc.), it is not surprising to find that they would still value it highly and not take it for granted as most men usually do.

The current study had several problems that could not be avoided. This study had as a necessary constraint the artificial limitation of time. If I had had unlimited time, I would have included additional groups of powerful women. If my interviewees had had unlimited time, I would have asked them additional questions about almost every one of their answers, stretching our time together geometrically. A necessary frustration of this type of research is that as meanings are emerging through the natural process of semi-structured conversations, the research itself seems to grow. With each question I saw additional questions that I wanted to ask, and with each interview I thought of additional interviewees that I wanted to interview. To complicate the issue further, of course, my reflections never ceased. One may say

that as a part of her study she will reflect before she begins research, and reflect after she gathers her information, but in reality one cannot limit one's reflections to those two periods, so my reflections were ongoing. As I said in my introduction, they bound my study on all sides-- front and back, right and left, and all the area inside. It is not possible, in other words, to escape from one's reflections. This is both a strength and a weakness of this method of research. It is impossible to gather data with a "clean slate" or a "blank tablet." One already has perceptions to start with, just as a positivist researcher does. And as one gathers data, those data further influence one's reflections. so the process feeds itself and is never-ending. This was one of the frustrations of the research. Just as I started to complete one part of the research, I would reflect upon additional things that I should or could do. Because one is letting the meanings emerge from the research, it seems more difficult to stay within the parameters of one's research than with traditional positivist methods.

Another important quality of the research that is both a strength and a weakness is that the researcher is forced to report it in the same language that she has decried-- fraught with its androcentric eccentricities. It is thus a demonstration of its own cultural frustrations. Just as I have noted "Freudian" type slips from the women subjects

who were also bound to our linguistic matrix, future readers and researchers may uncover similar subtle slips in my own prose. A dissertation itself, being an analytical form, is largely a part of the huge androcentric establishment. This dissertation, for all its phenomenological softness, has still purported to analyze rather than to feel, a limitation inherent in its own form.

The conclusions of this study cannot be broadly generalized in the same way they would be if they were based on traditional positivist research. They make no claim to be drawn from a representative sample. Their usefulness lies in the understanding and insights they are able to effect, and the meanings they are able to clarify. It is quite possible that the women in this study were unique because of their age, their generation, their geography, etc. It might be likely, for example, that Southern etiquette in a particular generation would dictate the modest denial of power by a powerful woman. Future research should address this.

This study had many important strengths. The research has carefully chosen women who are in a position to have power and to use it, and has examined their perceptions of power in order to determine the nature and experience of power to them.

Since this study has meticulously not defined power, it has allowed the meanings ascribed by the women to emerge

on their own through the course of the interviews. It has avoided contributing definitions to their discussions artificially.

This study has been direct in its consideration of the language problems associated with the investigation of women's power. It has addressed the issue of the limiting factor of language and has attempted to avoid claims that these limitations would preclude. It has acknowledged that the language limitation affects not only the research and the researcher, the printed literature and the interviewees, but also the readers who will examine the study. The researcher has acknowledged a responsibility to the research community and to future readers to clarify the language lens and has admitted that the best efforts may fall short of the goal, because even those best efforts are influenced by our existing cultural matrix and couched in our linguistic and academic androcentrism.

This study has been honest in its explanation of the researcher's bias, and has reported the perspective of the researcher for the consideration of the reader, whose perspective cannot be included in the written report of this study, but which should also be included in the examination of the results. The writer of this study, in fact, would like to charge the reader of this written report to examine his or her own perspective reflectively as a part of reading this report.

Finally, this study has been honest in its report of the cultural perspective and conceptual framework through a review of the related literature and a discussion of the cultural and sociological worldviews as they influence not only the writer but also the interviewees and the readers. Historically, this will be important because generations that follow will not have this same worldview. Happily, perhaps generations that follow will be surprised to find how influenced we have been in our day by sexist thinking, even as we are now surprised to read the rationale intelligent people had for holding slaves at various points in history.

An additional strength of this study is simply that it has considered something important. Power is important, and women are important. Women comprise greater than half the population, and they are entering the workforce in huge numbers. Further, men are interested in the opinions and perceptions of women now more than they ever have been before. The so-called "Age of Aquarius" is supposed to be an age of feminine energy, known and discussed among mystics, philosophers, astrologers, psychologists, parapsychologists, prophets, New Age devotees, Eastern consciousness students, and others: It is upon us. Finally, as women move more and more into non-traditional fields, they fall more and more out of their traditional roles, where their concepts

had been clearly defined before. The existing definitions in the new areas into which they are moving follow a male paradigm, and may not fit. It is important to think of new words, or define old words in new ways, as the meanings change.

This study has considered the human issue of power, its relationship to some women who have it, and their perception of what power is. The important contribution is that this study proposes a new paradigm more appropriate for examining women's power. With this new option it may be possible for society to measure women on their own terms. Spender (1984) pointed out that as long as women are being measured on men's terms, they can only try to be as good as a man (see Chapter II). With the option of a new model, it may now become possible for a woman aspiring to a position of power to try to be "as good as a woman."

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APPENDIX A  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is it like to be a woman?

What is a woman?

What is an appropriate role for a woman?

Tell me about the experience of being a woman.

2. Tell me about the experience of being an administrator.

What is it like to be an administrator?

What is an administrator?

What is an appropriate role for an administrator?

How does being a woman influence or impact your job as an administrator?

3. Tell me about power.

What is power to you?

When do you feel powerful?

What aspects of this position provide you with the feeling of power?

What is it like to be powerful?

What is power?

How should power function in this job?

Is power something that can be used?

Tell me how it feels to use power.

Do you have a lot of power?

When do you feel powerful?

How do you get power? What is it? Where does it come from?

What is the nature of a woman's power?

What is the nature of power to a woman?

What is a woman's experience of power?

In what ways could a woman experience power?

Who are some powerful women you could tell me about?

What makes a woman powerful?

What makes a woman unpowerful?

Can you tell me about an experience that really made you feel powerful?

What are some words that would be close to being synonyms for power?

What are some experiences of power you have had?

What is the experience of powerlessness?